VALLEY VOICE

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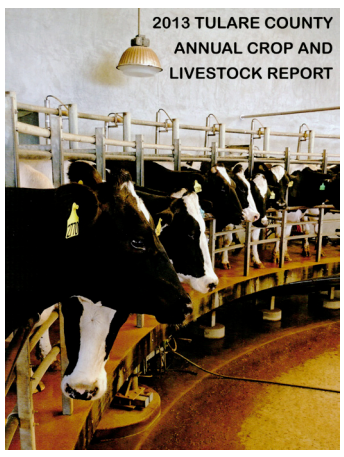
2013 Tulare County Crop Report Reveals Another Record Year

Steve Pastis

Last year was a good year for agriculture in Tulare County. In fact, it was the best year ever, according to the 2013 Tulare County Annual Crop and Livestock Report, presented to the Tulare County Board of Supervisors at its July 8 meeting.



The county's total gross production value for 2013 was $7,809,626,000, an increase of almost 26% -- or $1.6 billion -- over 2012, according to the report. As usual, milk led the way, this time with a gross value of more than $2 billion, up almost $270 million from 2012. Fruit and nut crops increased in value by 43% over 2012 to have a gross value of more than $4 billion.

Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner Marilyn Kinoshita reported that 40,000 new permanent orchard trees were planted in 2013, with pecan acreage doubling. She said there was an increase in lemon planting, and that persimmons, a popular crop in the 1990s, were making a comeback. After a bad year in 2012, kiwi experienced an increase of 90% last year. Pistachios also did well in 2013 because of its price, as well as its ability to tolerate alkaline soil.

Kinoshita also noted it was a good year for honeybees. "There was an increase in production and the price has improved. We have another 3 million pounds of orange honey." Colony collapse disorder was apparently not a factor. "That's all you hear about in the media, but I think that the worst of that is over," she said.

Crops that did not fare well in 2013 included field crops such as alfalfa, wheat and cotton, which went down in value by 6.5% last year because less

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CEMEX Stillwell Project in Lemon Cove

CEMEX Mine Drains Lemon Cove Wells

This is part one of a two-part series on CEMEX gravel mines drying up neighboring wells.

Catherine Doe

Is anyone grateful for the drought? CEMEX is. Founded in Mexico in 1906, CEMEX, one of the world's largest building material suppliers and cement producers, runs operations all across the globe. It is conveniently blaming the drought on the fact that residential wells in Lemon Cove are drying up - when in fact the evidence suggests otherwise.

In 2005, CEMEX opened the Stillwell Project in Tulare County to mine gravel. The mine is on property east of Lemon Cove and north of the antique stores along Highway 198. Several homes with private wells border the mine. Their wells risked going dry as a result of a lake formed when CEMEX started excavating the gravel. As a requirement of the conditional use permit (CUP), CEMEX had to conduct monthly groundwater monitoring and pump water into a recharge ditch to maintain groundwater levels. The recharge ditch ran the length of the mine and was to prevent the lake from sucking the private wells dry.

In January of this year, the Resource Management Agency (RMA), responsible for enforcing the conditional use permit, received five complaints about wells going dry, or about to go dry, next to the Stillwell Project. In response to the complaints, and in compliance with their CUP, CEMEX hired a company, EMKO Environmental, Inc. to do a hydrogeologic evaluation of the groundwater level around the Stillwell Project quarry.

Multinational companies such as CEMEX are not renowned for hiring people who disagree with them; it was no surprise, therefore, when EMKO Environmental completely exonerated the Mexican cement company--despite the fact that their own monthly groundwater monitoring reports showed that the water levels dropped a few months after CEMEX stopped

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Tulare County workers may finally be heard.

County Employees Get Closer to a Deal

Catherine Doe

On Monday July 7, Tulare County employee negotiators and Shelline Bennett, the lawyer representing the county, returned to the negotiating table. All the employees' hard work, outreach and testimonies paid off as the county offered a one-year contract with a 3% raise. The county employees then made an undisclosed counteroffer that Bennett was supposed to present to the Tulare County Board of Supervisors (BOS) at a special meeting that week.

Joanne Salazar, leading negotiator for Service Employees International Union, (SEIU) is still waiting for Bennett to inform her of the BOS' response to their counteroffer. Though a large group of employees active in SEIU know the nature of the counteroffer, union members want the negotiations to remain confidential.

During the Tulare County Employees meeting on July 9, Kermit Wullschleger, an employee negotiator, said the mood and attendance of the SEIU has skyrocketed and the room was filled with energy. The employees were encouraged that the BOS finally started moving forward, and encouraged their negotiating team to be strong. The workers feel that the BOS is finally listening to them and taking some accountability for their past actions.

The county employees also agreed to continue their effort to pursue a state audit of Tulare County's budget. On June 25, a small group of employees on the negotiating team took a van to Sacramento to meet with local lawmakers and members of the Joint Committee on Legislative Audit. They met with the chief of staff for the chair of the audit committee, who outlined the process they needed to take to get on the committee's agenda. The current goal of the negotiating team is to form an official group of community members and union employees to put together a professional

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Demolition and Ground Clearing Begins High-Speed Rail Construction in Fresno

Staff Reports

On July 14, construction of the California High-Speed Rail began in Fresno with demolition and ground-clearing operations as part of Construction Package 1. This is the first length of track to be laid in the state, stretching 29 miles from Avenue 17 in Madera to East American Avenue in Fresno. Ceding space for the line was the long-closed Annie's Hollywood Inn bar on Fresno's North Golden State Boulevard. The boulevard will be relocated.

Demolition begins at Annie's Hollywood Inn bar..

The California High-Speed Rail Authority design-build contractor Tutor-Perini/Zachry/Parsons began work in the morning, with its subcontractor J. Kroeker, Inc. demolishing the 66-year-old building. J. Kroeker Inc. is a women-owned small business headquartered in Fresno.

The Authority is responsible for planning, designing, building and operation of the nation's first high-speed rail. By 2029, the system is expected to run from San Francisco to the Los Angeles basin in under three hours at speeds exceeding 200 miles per hour. The system will eventually branch to Sacramento and San Diego, covering 800 miles with up to 24 stations. The Authority is working with regional partners to implement a statewide rail modernization plan that will invest billions of dollars in local and regional rail lines to meet the state's 21st century transportation needs.

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

A Murrain on Murrieta

If the 20th was the American Century, it follows that the United States spent much of that time--especially during the Cold War--propping up and otherwise aiding democracies across the globe. Just in the last decade we have joined battle in both Iraq and Afghanistan with the stated aim of promoting stability (democracy) in those countries. We have, admittedly, supported dictators when it was politically expedient--but it seems to me that we have, sometimes at gunpoint, pulled for the cause of democracy worldwide. I cannot even begin to calculate what this has cost us in terms of blood and treasure--a considerable sum, to be sure, but a price we appear always willing to pay in securing a brighter future.

So when the future comes to our door gift-wrapped, how do we react? By protesting, at least in Murrieta, California, where on July 1 of this year, three busloads of immigrant women and children were prevented from being processed in that town's Border Patrol facility. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, these arrivals, scheduled for every three days during this month, have been rerouted to San Ysidro. I say: Shame and infamy on Murrieta. A murrain on Murrieta.

The influx of mostly unaccompanied Central American minors--children, really--crossing the border illegally since last October has been heartbreaking to witness. Cynics might suggest that this represents nothing more than naked opportunism in the face of a lax or byzantine--certainly overwhelmed--immigration system that everyone agrees is badly in need of reform. What is badly in need of reform is the condition of life in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. In travelling north through Mexico--a truly dangerous journey where youngsters are at the mercy of strangers at every turn--these kids are escaping poverty and gang-related violence on a scale that we here can scarcely appreciate.

The following figures, from the years 1992-2011, are illustrative of the plight of these three Central American nations. The World Bank initially set the international poverty line, a monetary threshold at which an individual can be said to be living in poverty, at one dollar per day. It is currently $1.25 daily. Extending poverty to be defined as existing on two dollars per day, the CIA World Factbook counts 47.8% of Hondurans this poor. In Guatemala, that number is 39.9%, while 25.9% of El Salvador's population lives under this level of poverty. Furthermore, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime cites Honduras as the most murderous country in the world, with 90.4 killings for every 100,000 of its citizens. Fourth and fifth on that list, El Salvador and Guatemala respectively, suffer 41.2 and 39.9 slayings.

I don't know of anyone in this country who could survive each day on two dollars. Keep in mind--that's everything. The sum total. It's not merely a question of fasting, say, but of making two dollars cover all expenses. Quite literally, everything. At least the murder rate in this country is not nearly so high as it is in Central America; here, it is 4.8 homicides per 100,000 of us. So the youth arrive in droves, unaccompanied, having braved the perilous and arduous thousand miles to our border--where they immediately surrender themselves to the authorities. It seems fairly clear to me that they are seeking a safe harbor. Asylum. These children are refugees, and they're running for their lives.

To hear the far right talk, you would think the border is entirely too porous, and that these illegals are coming for all the nefarious reasons that adults usually do--to take jobs away from good Americans, causing a drag on our resources, paying next to no taxes, and costing us all money we can ill afford. I'm more than a little crestfallen to have heard the current batch described as a threat to public health, referred to as dirty and diseased. We are talking about people--specifically, children.

And they come to us! In how many countries have we intervened to promote democracy? How many of our troops have invaded other countries in the name of this cause? And how much has it cost us over the years?

We would do much better--and it would be cheaper--to accept these kids for what they are: the future. Compared with our military adventures abroad, and the foreign aid we annually dole out globally in terms of money and foodstuffs, it would be much more expedient for us to take these young people in. To welcome them. To feed, clothe, house and educate them. It would be better--and cheaper--to give these children a decent shot here. And who knows? They could well grow up, many of them, to be solid, contributing members of our society.

This is our chance to mold some model Americans. We're not talking about terrorists or criminals or even adults. We already have enough dubious adults in this country, as the July 1 protest in Murrieta plainly attests to. And now that town is suffering some of the consequences of its intolerance. Unlike the city of Bell, which is working with the Salvation Army to create temporary shelters for these children, Murrieta's police department has had to increase its active patrol from eight to 25 officers to control protesters. City employees have worked long hours to contend with the situation--with the result that, according to Mayor Alan Long, Murrieta has thus far incurred $50,000 in overtime pay. Good. I say again: A murrain on Murrieta.

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— Joseph Oldenbourg

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Political Fix

Catherine Doe

Mayor Ashley Swearengin in the Cat Bird Seat

Who could have asked for a more perfect series of events? Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearengin discreetly sits as a candidate in the November election for California's State Controller, while her two Democratic opponents battle it out for second place. It was generally accepted that the Democrat who went on to the general election would easily win the office. That's not so sure right now.

Betty Yee, of the State Board of Equalization, was officially declared the winner over former Assembly Speaker John Perez by 481 votes. Mr. Perez has, in response, sought the first recount in modern history of a statewide office in California.

Theoretically, if there were a complete recount, Ms. Yee would again be declared the winner by a small margin. But, seeing as California does not pay for recounts, it is up to the losing candidate to foot the bill, and pick the precincts. Mr. Perez has plenty of extra campaign cash left over from the primary to call for a recount, but cannot afford to do the entire state, which would cost over $4 million. He is only paying for those precincts that are heavily Hispanic and which voted overwhelmingly for him.

By just recounting precincts that polled heavily in his favor, Mr. Perez could manufacture his own victory. Once he has made up the 481 votes he can call off the recount and declare victory. Ms. Yee might counter with her own recount but does not have the same financial resources available as does Mr. Perez.

This boils down to Ms. Swearengin running against someone who will be perceived as buying the election. How well is that going to go down with the voters? We will see. And we might also see the first Republican win a statewide office since Steve Poizner won Insurance Commissioner in 2006.

To Form a More Perfect Union

After 18 years as a Congresswoman and 16 as Maine's Senator, Olympia Snowe declined to run for office again, even though she won her last election with 74% of the vote. Tired of the polarizing atmosphere in Washington and a dysfunctional Congress, Ms. Snowe has put her efforts instead into reform. Ms. Snowe posted a blog on Independence Day outlining her commission's recommendations on how to strengthen our democracy.

On her blog, she quoted a recent article by Dana Milbank in the *Washington Post*, "Congress has passed just 56 public laws this year, for a total of 121 since the beginning of 2013. This virtually guarantees the current Congress will be the least productive in history, well behind the 'do nothing' Congress of 1948, which passed more than 900 bills. And many of the 121 bills are not exactly weighty."

The Bipartisan Policy Center's Commission on Political Reform, of which she is the co-chair, is made up of leaders who not only hail from different political parties, but have a deep understanding of how the legislative process can work, should work, and must work. Their recommendations are so basic it's laughable. Below are ten out of their sixty total recommendations, the most striking stating that Congress has to actually show up for work. Over the course of three months in 2014, Congress only spent 53% of business days in session. The Commission on Political Reform is recommending that Congress work five-day work weeks and three weeks straight.

The following is a list of ten main commission recommendations.

1. Increase voter participation in primaries - Only 20% of eligible voters vote in Congressional primaries. The commission recommends that states and political parties aim for 30% by 2020 and 35% by 2026. Rather than a year-long process that confuses voters, we recommend a single June Congressional primary date, more open primaries and eliminating Congressional caucuses and conventions.

2. Balance access and integrity in our elections -We recommend that states use the data revolution to (1) identify eligible, unregistered voters and offer them the opportunity to register and (2) greatly improve the accuracy of voter rolls.

3. Ensure a fair process for drawing congressional districts -To reduce distrust between the two parties, we urge the adoption of redistricting commissions with the bipartisan support of state legislatures and the electorate, to avoid the kind of single-party gerrymandering that has contributed to political polarization.

4. Tackle money in politics -All political contributions, including those made to outside and independent groups, should be disclosed. Congress should also pass legislation requiring detailed disclosure of spending by congressional leadership PACs and mandate that those funds be used solely for political activities, not personal use.

5. Reform the filibuster and Senate debate - Don't allow filibusters on whether to move to debate a bill. And, at the same time, guarantee a minimum number of 10 amendments, split between the majority and minority, on each bill debated.

6. Empower congressional committees - Legislation should go through the full committee and amendment processes to avoid power in Congress being too centralized. By strengthening the role of congressional committees, we will create fertile soil for consensus building across the aisle.

7. Spend more time legislating in Washington — and with one another - The House and Senate should schedule synchronized, five-day workweeks in Washington, with three weeks in session followed by one-week recesses. The President and Congressional leadership should hold regular monthly meetings, and the President should attend biannual joint caucuses.

8. Adopt a biennial budget cycle -To avoid the annual clash over the budget and ensure better oversight and long-term thinking, Congress should adopt a two-year cycle for budget and appropriations. The current annual budgeting process is badly broken — as crisis after crisis has shown over the past few years.

9. Create an expectation to serve -We encourage a year of service for Americans ages 18 to 28, and recommend greatly improving the opportunities to serve in programs like AmeriCorps and the Peace Corps, to run for political office or to serve in appointed office. This would fulfill Americans' enthusiasm to give back.

10. Improve the presidential appointments process -The onerous appointments process discourages many of the most qualified applicants. We recommend cutting back on unnecessary restrictions to serve, streamlining the financial disclosure process, reducing the number of positions requiring Senate confirmation and encouraging the private sector to allow employees to take a temporary position in government.

Third Time's the Charm?

Three guesses on who the front runner is for the Republican ticket in 2016: Tea Partier Ted Cruz? No. Pedantic Jeb Bush? No. Fire-in-the-belly-but-no-lights-on-at-home Sarah Palin? No.

It is Mitt Romney.

According to the *Business Insider*, "if the election were held today, 39% of Republican voters in New Hampshire would vote for Romney. Next on the list are U.S. Sen. Rand Paul (R-Kentucky) and New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who each only garner 7% of the vote. Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush is behind them with 6%."

That's a 22-point lead over the most popular Republican candidates, none of whom even crack double digits. Revenge is sweet but vindication is forever, and Mr. Romney must be feeling vindicated right now on so many levels.

During the 2012 campaign, when it looked like Mr. Romney would win the Republican nomination, there was a constant hopeful rumble that someone better would jump into the race. Mr. Romney was seen as a weak front-runner and appeared unable to unite the Republican Party behind him.

Now the shoe is on the other foot.

It is clear from the New Hampshire poll that Republican primary voters are unsatisfied with their party's presidential hopefuls and that they are looking for alternatives. There is some wishful thinking that Mr. Romney might jump into the race. Who, out of all the candidates, can raise a billion dollars and convince the majority of the American people that he or she is the right person for the job? Also, a recent Quinnipiac poll found that 45% of respondents think the country would be better off if Mr. Romney had been elected president in 2012. There is also a general consensus that much of what he campaigned on turned out to be right.

He has to be feeling pretty good right now compared to when he was sitting with his family in the Westin Hotel and Convention Center in Boston, watching the election slip away despite being told he was going to win.

It's hard to doubt Mr. Romney's sincerity when he says he will not run again, but all the attention and poll numbers must be flattering. He not only looks attractive compared to the list of Republican candidates, but is a much younger and vital alternative than anything the Democrats can dish up.

All the publicity makes one wonder, if Mr. Romney had stuck to his principles, like Mr. Kashkari did during the California primary, and didn't pander to the radical wing of the Republican Party, how far could he have gone. Maybe we will find out.

The Circus Comes to Porterville

A lot happened at the July 1st Porterville City Council meeting. First they picked newly elected Milte Stowe as mayor, someone who won a commanding percent of the vote, but has no experience being on a council or even any of their committees. Some have wondered out loud why Mr. Stowe didn't defer the position due to his inexperience. Brian Ward, on the other hand, has been on the city council for six years and has been vice-mayor twice. Mystery number one is why they didn't pick Mr. Ward or reaffirm Cam Hamilton.

Their second decision was to make Mr. Hamilton the vice-mayor. Mystery number two is why the council didn't just reaffirm Mr. Hamilton as mayor, as he had only held the seat less than a year. It took two rounds of head scratching voting for Mr. Hamilton to be appointed vice-mayor.

Their third decision was to take applications to fill the late Pete McCracken's seat. Mr. McCracken came in second in the June election but passed away soon after. The prevailing thought on the council is that they want someone experienced in community service and new blood. Matt Green is not only active in the Porterville community and is new blood, but he came in a strong third in the election. Mystery number three is why waste city time taking applications when the voters have already chosen Mr. McCracken's replacement?

By the July 9th deadline, city staff had received 16 applications to be considered for appointment to the Porterville City Council. Four of those applicants lost to Mr. Green in the election, so it would be a bit arrogant for the council to imply they know better than the voters by picking one of them. Another applicant, Felipe Martinez, has run for city council three times, and lost three times, making it clear how the voters feel about him. My favorite is Ron Irish, who also happens to be the brother-in-law of Mr. McCracken. As written in Mr. Irish's application to be considered for appointment to the city council, "because of being in the public eye for so long, I have come under three investigations. One: An accusation by some disgruntled citizens and a council member to the FBI concerning me getting a free home from Ennis Builders. That was completely false and after two years the case was dropped. And that councilman has apologized for the false accusations made towards me."

The problem with Mr. Irish's highlighting the three investigations is that in one of them he was found guilty of conflict of interest involving the Porterville Chamber of Commerce. He was not charged with a crime or fined but warned that this incident could be used against in the future.

Juan Duran, president of El Centro Mexicano American Latino, and former candidate for the city council, did not submit an application because he disagreed with the process. He feels that the

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Visalia Community Rotary Foundation Announces Record $127,500 in Grants

The Visalia Rotary Community Foundation will soon award a record $127,500 in grants to local organizations, including the largest grant ever awarded by the foundation.

The foundation is a joint effort of five Visalia Rotary clubs and the grants are a result of donations to the foundation by Rotarians and non-Rotarians. Including the 2013 grants, the foundation has donated more than $973,200 to local organizations since its formation in 1997.

The foundation will present ImagineU Children's Museum a grant of $50,000 – the largest grant ever presented. The funds will be used to help purchase and install technology infrastructure at the new museum, scheduled to open in Visalia in the summer of 2015.

Other organizations to receive a grant at Rotary meetings in July and August are as follows:

- Assistance League. Help with Operation School Bell, providing clothing to junior high students. $5,000
- The Blanket Ladies. Purchase materials to make blankets and bears, donated to local social services agencies. $5,000
- Visalia Emergency Aid. Improvements to the Thrift Store building. $10,000
- The Creative Center. Repair and replace the asphalt parking lot. $15,000
- Golden State YMCA. Repair and redesign skate ramps at the Sequoia Lake skate camp. $5,000
- Happy Trails Riding Academy. Expand the program by adding another riding arena, three pastures and a cart-driving path. $15,000
- Tulare County Symphony League. To help fund the Junior Symphony and the Elementary Junior Strings, both after-school programs. $7,500
- Visalia Parks and Recreation Foundation. Complete four years of planned improvements at Rotary Park in just one year. $15,000

Members of the Grant Committee who reviewed the applications are Larry Benevento, Dale Bruder, Tony Correia, Peter Golombek, Gary Paden, Marvin Hansen, Paul Sonier, Laurie Tiesiera and Steve Chrisman. The executive director of the foundation is Eric Shannon.

Projects funded over the years include donations to develop a water well at Happy Trails Riding Academy, FoodLink for Tulare County, the Groppetti Community Stadium, a backup electrical system at Camp Tulequoia, upgraded sound and lighting at Rotary Theatre, and the expansion of the classroom at Family Services' battered women's shelter in Visalia.

For more information, call Steve Chrisman, Buckman-Mitchell, Inc., Insurance and Financial Services, at 635-3542.

Nomination Papers Now Available for November 4th General Election

Nomination papers for offices to be voted on in the November 4th General Election will be available through Friday, August 8, in the Elections Division, Government Plaza, 5951 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia.

The offices for which nomination papers are available include:

- City councils in Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Tulare and Woodlake.
- Unified school districts in Alpaugh, Cutler-Orosi, Dinuba, Farmersville, Porterville and Woodlake.
- Elementary school districts: Allensworth, Alta Vista, Buena Vista, Burton, Citrus South Tule, Ducor, Earlimart, Hot Springs, Kings River Union, Liberty, Oak Valley Union, Outside Creek, Pixley, Pleasant View, Richgrove, Rockford, Saucelito, Sequoia Union, Springville Union, Strathmore, Sundale, Sunnyside, Terra Bella Union, Three Rivers Union, Tipton, Traver Joint Union, Tulare City, Waukena Joint Union and Woodville Union.
- Tulare County Board of Education.
- High school districts: Delano Joint Union – Kern, Hanford Joint Union – Kings, Kingsburg Joint Union – Fresno, and Tulare Joint Union.
- College districts: College of Sequoias, Kern Community College and State Center Community College.
- Kings River Conservation District.
- Community services districts in Alpaugh, Allensworth, Goshen and Tipton.
- Hospital districts: Alta Healthcare, Exeter Ambulance, Kaweah Delta Healthcare, Lindsay Local Hospital, North Kern-South Tulare Hospital, Sierra View Local Hospital and Tulare Local Healthcare.
- Memorial districts in Dinuba, Orosi, Porterville, Springville, Terra Bella, Tulare and Visalia.
- Public utility districts in Ivanhoe and Pixley.

Some of these offices require nomination signatures to be gathered during the nomination period, July 14 through August 8, 2014. Contact the elections office for further information.

Elections office hours are: 7:30am to 5:30pm Monday through Thursday, 8am to noon on Friday, and 8am to 5pm on Friday, August 8th.

For information regarding filing for an elective office, call 624-7300, or for information on nomination papers that have been filed, check the current candidate list at: www.tularecounty.ca.gov/registrarofvoters.

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Political Fix

Continued from p. 3

appointment will be a slap in the face to the voters of Porterville. When asked who he thinks the city council will pick out of the 16 applicants at their meeting July 15th, Mr. Duran said, "I have no idea."

And Finally

Most politicians can't go fifteen minutes off script without stepping in it. Neel Kashkari? He went 13 hours over the course of a month as a guest host on several talk radio shows and performed brilliantly. According to the *Sacramento Bee*, the program director of KFBK of Sacramento said, "If this politics thing doesn't work out, we should talk." Is there anything this guy can't do?

Governor Brown, who has pretty much ignored the campaign, had his own radio experience throughout the 1980's and 1990's in the Bay Area. Seeing as Gov. Brown has a fairly demanding day job he won't be on the radio anytime soon. After more than 40 years in public office, I think we are all OK with that.

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Park Service Report Confirms Climate Change in National Parks

Staff Reports

A new report authored by the National Park Service confirms that climate change is happening in America's national parks, and in some cases in rapid and concerning ways. These changes will have implications for what visitors see and experience in national parks and will require new approaches to the protection of natural and historic resources within parks.

"This report shows that climate change continues to be the most far-reaching and consequential challenge ever faced by our national parks," said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. "Our national parks can serve as places where we can monitor and document ecosystem change without many of the stressors that are found on other public lands."

In a newly published article, "Climate Exposure of US National Parks in a New Era of Change," National Park Service scientists William B. Monahan and Nicholas A. Fisichelli studied climate data of the last 10-30 years from 1901-2012 from 289 national parks. They found that temperatures are now at the high end of the range of temperatures measured since 1901. This is true across several temperature measurements, including annual average temperature, average temperature of the winter months, and average temperature of the summer months. The data also point to changes in precipitation patterns over time. These findings are consistent with previous research by the National Park Service, as well as other national and international reports including the recently released National Climate Assessment.

Grand Canyon National Park is one example of an area with significant natural resources that has recently experienced extreme high average temperatures compared to its historical patterns. Warmer temperatures and extended drought are a direct threat to endangered species, and impacts the wildlife's source of drinking water such as seeps and springs in the canyon.

General Sherman Tree

Historic sites are not immune to the impacts of climate change. At Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, increased temperatures and hydrologic changes have the potential to alter the natural and man-made resources of the park. These effects could include landscape changes that will affect access to and the structural integrity of bridges, locks, lock houses, culverts, dams and monuments. Increased occurrences of severe storms, flooding and other unpredictable weather, and changes in growing seasons will affect vegetation and the animals that depend on that vegetation.

In June, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell toured Jamestown Island and hosted a roundtable discussion with scientists and experts on the impacts of climate change on cultural resources at Virginia's Historic Jamestowne, part of Colonial National Historical Park, and across the region.

"Beyond benefiting public health and the economy, the president's Climate Action Plan and other administration efforts to cut carbon pollution will greatly benefit the parks, refuges, other public lands and cultural resources entrusted to the Department of the Interior on behalf of all Americans," said Jewell. "Through sound science and collaboration, we need to examine how we can help cultural and natural resources adapt to climate change and become more resilient to its impacts."

With an eye on the approaching National Park Service centennial in 2016, the report highlights the need to provide up-to-date scientific information to park and neighboring land managers, and for sufficient climate science to be disseminated to the general public so that parks are positioned to best protect their resources for future generations. Park managers will be increasingly challenged to develop management strategies to help park resources adapt to climate change, and how best to accomplish the task.

"Studies like this are critical to inform national park managers and visitors alike about their local climate impacts so they can take proactive steps to address climate change," Jarvis said. "Although the National Park Service alone cannot reverse the climate changes highlighted in this report, communicating these impacts with our 275 million annual visitors can make a difference."

The international, online scientific journal *PLOS ONE*, highlighted this analysis in a new collection entitled *Responding to Climate Change*, in which it shares recent research focused on solutions to manage resources in a changing climate. A copy of the original article is online at http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0101302.

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The Seine by night.

Visalia Chamber Announces 'The Seine; Paris to Normandy' Trip

Staff Reports

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce has announced the first trip in its 2015 lineup of tours. "The Seine: Paris to Normandy," a 13-day trip with four different pre and post-trip extensions, is a river cruise down the Seine River through the beautiful French countryside.

After an overnight trip, travelers will arrive in Paris, France. After a short transfer to Charles de Gaulle Airport, travelers will begin the river cruise in Honfleur, during which they will visit the Peace Memorial Museum and tour St. Catherine's church. Next on the itinerary are the beaches of Normandy. For a full day, travelers will visit the beaches and walk the cliffs overlooking Omaha Beach. As the ship makes its way back to Paris, travelers will experience the cliffs of Etretat, the Old Quarter of Rouen and Notre Dame Cathedral, and tour the Giverny home of Monet. Throughout the tour, travelers will learn French phrases, take a painting class, participate in a cooking demonstration and join a local family for a home-hosted visit.

Travelers looking to extend their stay may purchase extensions including: three nights in Brittany and Mont St. Michel, France; four nights in London, England; three nights in Paris; or four nights in Loire Valley, France.

The cost of this tour begins at $3835 per person and includes round-trip airfare from Fresno, 30 meals and six exclusive tours.

This tour is presented by the chamber's travel partner, Grand Circle Travel. For more information on the chamber travel program, call Nicola Wissler at 734-5876, or visit www.visaliachamber.org and click on the travel link for details itineraries and pricing information.

Avrek Law Firm Launches 'DriveSafe Scholarship Contest'

Staff Reports

Avrek Law Firm has announced the launch of the DriveSafe Scholarship Contest, a 501c viral video contest on the dangers of distracted driving awarding $9,000 in scholarship funds, with first prize winning $5,000. The Irvine-based law firm wanted to do its part to prevent the lifelong impact that distracted driving accidents can create.

"All of us need to come together, help spread the word and educate each other how dangerous distracted driving is to ourselves, friends, families and community," said Avrek partner Maryam Parmen.

Videos will be posted on YouTube and can be any format: journalistic, documentary, PSA, song, sketch or compilation. Ten finalists will be chosen and a panel of judges will determine the top three, awarding a first prize $5,000 scholarship, second prize $2,500 scholarship, and third prize $1500 scholarship.

Non-students can also win prizes such as Visa gift cards by participating in the referral contest by sharing the DriveSafe webinar. This is a points-based contest where participants can earn points by simply sharing the Avrek contest link across social media channels so more people are exposed to the dangers of distracted driving.

There are three types of distractions that drivers face: manual, visual and cognitive. Five seconds is the average time your eyes are off the road when texting. It may sound like a short amount of time, but if traveling at 55 mph, five seconds is enough time to cover the length of a football field blindfolded.

Texting is a major visual distraction, but it's not the only visual distraction that takes a driver's eyes off of the road. Whether you are driving slowly through a residential area or speeding down the interstate, it is absolutely crucial to have your eyes on the road at all times.

Most drivers don't think, for instance, that it's dangerous to eat or drink while driving, but approximately 80% of all car accidents and 65% of near misses can be blamed on a distracted driver who was more focused on what was going in their mouth then what was happening on the road, according to the National Highway Safety Administration.

There are many ways to prevent distracted driving, such as turning off your phone when driving and only using it for emergencies when you're on the road. Keeping your phone out of sight by putting it in the glove box, purse or backpack while driving can ensure you're not tempted to text or go online while you're driving. Additionally, you can use the AT&T Drivemode application, which is free and lets you set up auto-replies that are sent to incoming texts, e-mails and calls, so you can keep your focus on the road.

"In California, a state with over 22 million licensed drivers navigating crowded freeways on a daily basis, it is inevitable that the motorist to your right, left, in front of you or behind may be distracted and your life may be at risk. In the effort to make roads safer and eliminate distracted driving, California takes cell phone bans seriously," said Parmen.

In California, all drivers are banned from using handheld cell phones. The ban, enacted in 2009, has been successful in decreasing the number of fatal accidents involving a cell phone.

Entries are due by September 30. To register or for more information, visit www.avrek.com/scholarships.

Lost, Scared Pets Inundate SPCA After Holiday Fireworks

Valley Oak SPCA

For at least one week before the 4th of July holiday and for several days afterwards, people and their pets had to listen to fireworks going off in their Visalia neighborhoods. And for pets that are frightened of loud noises, this was torture.

Our social media followers and our customers visiting the shelter all had the same lament and same plea for help – "How do I make this holiday less stressful for my pets?"

Although we give the standard answers as every other animal shelter, humane society and SPCA in the country – keep your pet indoors, use the TV or radio to create sound in your home, visit your veterinarian, use the popular "Thunder shirts" – we were inundated with lost, scared pets. Last year, 213 pets arrived during the 12 days we measured. This year, that number rose to 268 pets arriving at our shelter, an increase of 55 pets or 25.8%. Most of these are dogs and puppies without any form of identification.

As we've done every year, we set up a triage of sorts to match lost pets with their owners. Several volunteers and staff members worked tirelessly to get pets back home. Social media was full of postings, including ours at www.facebook.com/valleyoakspcamissingandfoundpets.

We are happy to share that through our efforts we were able to get 37 or 14% of arriving pets back home to their owners. This is an increase of 17 pets compared to last year, when we were able to reunite 9% of lost pets with their owners. We anticipate some more will get reunited as people return from vacations to find their pet is missing.

The wow has gone out of the Chihuahua.

We are also happy that we increased adoptions during this time as well, freeing up much needed space for the new arrivals. Forty-seven pets were adopted in the 12 days measured, compared to 34 last year.

If you love animals, Valley Oak SPCA strongly encourages you to help in our lifesaving efforts by doing the following:

- Microchip your pets.
- License your pets.
- Spay/neuter your pets. Your license fee is significantly lower. If your pet isn't altered and arrives in our shelter, we must charge you a State of California Civil Penalty of $35 for owning an unaltered pet, and we must charge you a license fee if your pet isn't licensed in the City of Visalia. An altered pet license is as low as $8 for cats and $18 for dogs. If your dog is not spayed or neutered, a license costs $75.
- Make sure your pet is wearing a collar with your phone number on it. Many Good Samaritans find lost pets and they will call you if your number is on the collar.
- Bring lost pets to our shelter. People looking for their pet will look at our shelter, not your home or your Facebook page, to reclaim their pet.
- If you must use fireworks, please only do so on the actual holiday. Because fireworks were rampant for so many days before and so many days after the 4th, we have many more animals to care for and try to reunite or re-home. Please help share this message.

"It is heartbreaking for our staff, volunteers and animal lovers to see the unnecessary suffering of pets and their owners this time of year," said Valley Oak SPCA Executive Director Tami Crawford. "While not a fan of fireworks, I understand the love people have for them. I simply wish we could confine fireworks to only one night and within a specific time frame as the cumulative effect on pets is devastating for some families as they watch their pet suffer. And even worse, lose their beloved pet as it runs in terror; some getting hit by a car, some never being found again. We feel that grief and sadness with all of these pet families."

For more information, visit www.vospca.org.

Kaweah Delta Announces New Class of Graduate Medical Education Resident Physicians

Staff Reports

Kaweah Delta Health Care District has selected its next class of resident physicians for its emergency medicine and family medicine programs and its first class of psychiatry residents.

From September through February, Kaweah Delta received more than 1,400 applications to the residency programs and interviewed approximately 300 of the applicants for the 16 available training slots. Resident physicians (or residents) have earned medical (M.D. or D.O.) degrees after four years in medical school. They are then in "residency," training for an additional three to five years to complete their education in the art and science of medicine and become specialists in their chosen field.

The following resident physicians were chosen to begin Kaweah Delta's programs:

Emergency Medicine – Sean Andrews, DO, Western University of Health Sciences; David Denson, MD, Medical College of Wisconsin; Tam Le, MD, Chicago Medical School; Rosalind Franklin, University of Medicine and Science; Phyllis Cowan, DO, Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine of Midwestern University; Erik Miguel, DO, A.T. Still University; and Kunal Sukhija, MD, UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine.

Family Medicine – Desta Ellis, MD, Escuela Lationoamericana de Medicina; Aisha Hanif, MD, Ross University; Uzma Qureshi, MD, Dow Medical College; Pouria Sadeghi, MD, Saba University; Adesina Sanni, MD, Obafemi Awolowo College; and Tehniyat Shorish, MD, King Edward Medical College.

Psychiatry – Kingwai Lui, DO, Western University of Health Sciences; Gagandeep Randhawa, MD, Government Medical College of Amritsar; Kamaldeep Sandhu, MD, St. George's University; and Michael Serna, MD, Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara.

Gagandeep Randhawa

Kamaldeep Sandhu

Kingwai Lui

Michael Serna

Resident physicians will begin orientation at the end of June, before starting their rotations at the district. They will join the six family medicine residents and six emergency medicine residents already at Kaweah Delta, who this year enter their second year of training.

When they are not caring for patients, resident physicians will train inside Kaweah Delta's Margaret Foley Graduate Medical Education Center. The center houses offices, classrooms, conference rooms and a lounge, and opens up into a newly expanded Lynn Havard Mirviss Education Center, where resident physicians can be observed training on SimMan, a portable and advanced patient simulator that challenges and tests clinical and decision-making skills during realistic patient care scenarios.

Next year, Kaweah Delta will add a Transitional Year Residency Program. In following years it will add a General Surgery Residency Program.

Established in 1963, Kaweah Delta Health Care District is one of the area's most progressive healthcare providers. It is the only facility with Magnet status in the San Joaquin Valley serving children and adults, and remains the only level III trauma center serving Tulare and Kings counties. The district offers a comprehensive scope of services including everything from a well-respected pediatric hospitalist program to nationally recognized orthopedic and cancer programs.

For more information, visit www.kaweahdelta.org or follow Kaweah Delta on Twitter and Facebook.

Pictured (left to right) are Chairman Deborah Brantley, scholarship winner Brittany Withnall and Co-Chairman Sondra Jones.

CVWN to Celebrate Fifth Anniversary at 'Christmas in July' on July 19th

Central Valley W.O.M.E.N'S Network will celebrate its fifth anniversary at "Christmas in July" from 10am-3pm on Saturday, July 19, at the Visalia Lamp Liter Inn. CVWN is a group of home-based businesswomen who host two events per year, Christmas in July and the Holiday Marketplace Boutique, to raise money for their scholarship fund and Relay For Life in Tulare.

This year's CVWN scholarship winner is Brittany Withnell from Visalia, who graduated from El Diamante High School in June and will be entering Cal Poly as a freshman majoring in animal science with a secondary major in biology. Brittany has been very active in FFA, receiving numerous awards. She held the treasurer position for the 2013-14 school year, participated in the FFA Annual Can Food Drive all four years at El Diamante, volunteered on the Junior Fair Board and helped organize and run various activities at the Tulare County Fair. Her goal is to enter the veterinary field.

Those interested in applying for the 2015 CVWN scholarship should visit the "Scholarship Application" page at www.centralvalleywomensnetwork.org.

RECYCLE THIS PAPER
USE IT TO MAKE SHADE

Home-Generated Sharps Drop-Off Days

These events are only for residents of Tulare County:

- **June 14 (Saturday) 10 am to 2 pm**
  Tulare City Hall - 411 E. Kern - Rear Parking Lot
- **June 26 (Thursday) 2 pm to 6 pm**
  Dinuba Transit Center Parking Lot - 180 W. Merced
- **July 10 (Thursday) 2pm to 6pm**
  Visalia - Parking Lot 44 - Tipton at Oak, between Center and Murray
- **July 19 (Saturday) 8 am to 12 pm**
  Porterville Corporation Yard
  555 N. Prospect, Enter on Grand Ave

The new Home-Generated Sharps Waste Collection Program goes into effect on July 1, 2014. To launch the program, Consolidated Waste Management Authority is hosting four free drop-off events throughout Tulare County to collect sharps from residents. Sharps will only be accepted in approved certified sharps containers.

The program provides Tulare County residents free drop-off of their used sharps at the local retailer where they originally purchased their sharps.

What are home-generated sharps?
Needles, syringes and lancets used by residents for themselves, family members, or their pets.

Why do I need to use the drop-off service?
It is illegal to dispose of sharps waste in the trash, recycling, and yard waste containers or flush them down the toilet.

What do I need to know?

- Certified sharps containers can be purchased at your local pharmacy.
- Sharps in any other type of container will not be accepted.
- No drugs or prescription medicines accepted.
- These events are for home-generated sharps waste only.
- Proof of Tulare County residency is required by showing either a driver's license or current utility bill with a Tulare County address.

CWMA

For more information:
Call 559.713-4404 or visit: www.cwmarecycles.com

Miya Family and UCCE to be Honored at 2014 Salute to Ag Banquet in Lemoore

Staff Reports

The Lemoore Chamber of Commerce has announced that the Miya Family and University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) will be the honorees at the 20th Annual Kings County Salute to Agriculture Banquet.

The chamber will host the event on Friday, September 12, at Jack Stone's Barn, where the Miya Family will be honored as the 2014 Agriculturalist of the Year. Miya Farms, established in the 1930s, is a diversified family farm, growing walnuts, grapes, cotton, corn, pistachios and various other crops.

The Ag Supporter of the Year award will be presented to UCCE, which is celebrating 100 years of service. Special recognition will be given to longtime Kings County UC farm advisor Dr. Bob Beede for his many years of service and dedication to Kings County agriculture.

For 100 years and counting, UCCE researchers and educators have worked together with local community members to develop and provide science-based information to solve economic, agricultural, natural resource, youth development and nutrition issues. Some of its programs include 4-H Youth Development, Master Gardeners, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, and the Integrated Pest Management Program.

"The Miya Family and the UCCE are quintessential examples of being advocates for Kings County agriculture," said Carolina Evangelo, Salute to Ag chair. "Both are leaders in the community and we are excited to recognize them for their dedication to the industry."

In addition to honoring this year's agriculturalist and ag supporter, the evening will also include a hosted social, hors d'oeuvres and dinner. Socializing begins at 6pm, dinner will be served at 7pm and the awards program will be at 8pm.

Sponsorship opportunities and reservations to decorate tables are being accepted. Inquiries and reservations for the event may be made by calling the Lemoore Chamber at 924-6401. Paid reservations received by August 20 are $60, or a table of eight for $400. Reservations made after August 20 will be $75 per person. Tickets will not be available at the door.

For more information about the event, contact Jenny MacMurdo at 924-6401 or events@lemoorechamberofcommerce.com; or Carolina Evangelo at 209-777-8995 or cevangelo@ymail.

Días para la recoleccion agujas usada generadas por uso domestico.

AGUJAS

Estos eventos son solo para residentes del Condado de Tulare:

- **Junio 14 (Sábado) 10 am a 2 pm**
  Ayuntamiento de Tulare
  411 E. Kern - estacionamiento trasero
- **Junio 26 (Jueves) 2 pm a 6 pm**
  Estación de autobuses de Dinuba - 180 W. Merced
- **Julio 10 (Jueves) 2pm a 6pm**
  Estacionamiento 44 de Visalia - Calle Tipton y Oak Ave
- **July 19 (Sábado) 8 am a 12 pm**
  Almacén de la Ciudad de Porterville - (Corporation Yard)
  555 N. Prospect, Entre por la avenida Grand

El nuevo Programa para la Recolección de agujas usadas generadas por uso doméstico entra en efecto el 1 de Julio del 2014. El Departamento Consolidado para la Recolección de Residuos está patrocinando un evento gratuito de 4 horas para los residentes del Condado de Tulare. Las agujas usadas solamente se aceptaran en contenedores aprobados y certificados.

El programa proporciona a los residentes del Condado de Tulare la oportunidad de llevar las agujas usadas a la tienda o establecimiento donde se hayan comprado originalmente sin costo alguno.

¿Que son las agujas generadas por uso doméstico?
Agujas, jeringas y lancetas usadas por personas, miembros de familia, o mascotas.

¿Por qué debo de utilizar el servicio de recolección?
Es ilegal tirar las agujas usadas en los contenedores de basura regular, reciclable y para desechos de yarda, o tirarlas en el excusado.

¿Qué necesito saber?

- Los contenedores certificados pueden comprarse en su farmacia local.
- No se aceptaran agujas usadas en cualquier otro tipo de contenedor.
- No se aceptaran medicinas recetadas o drogas.
- Estos eventos son para recolectar solamente agujas usadas generadas por uso doméstico.
- Se requiere presentar un comprobante de residencia en el Condado de Tulare, como la licencia de conducir o un estado de cuenta actual de cualquier servicio doméstico con dirección en el Condado de Tulare.

CWMA

For more information:
Call 559.713-4404 or visit: www.cwmarecycles.com

Crop Report

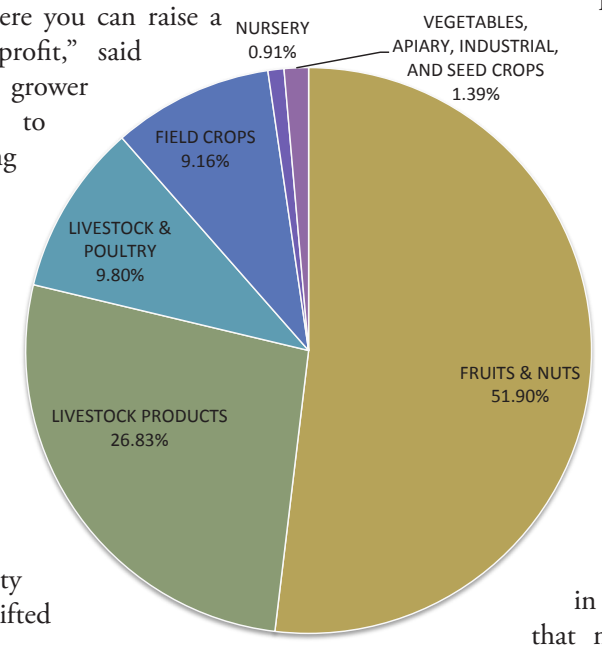
Continued from p. 1

was grown and prices decreased. Pomegranates were hurt by the winter freeze, and left on the trees instead of harvested.

The drought's impact on last year's numbers is "only in the livestock head sold," said Kinoshita. "That number is quite a bit higher and drought-related, but you probably won't see that problem next year.

"A lot of our dairymen are branching out into almonds, walnuts and pistachios, where you can raise a pretty good profit," said Kinoshita. "A grower might decide to add something like walnuts as part of their business model, rather than growing alfalfa or hay."

Seed crops, a high-dollar specialty crop, has shifted from the west side to Tulare County. Even a specialty manure item from an animal that Kinoshita "was not at liberty to disclose" sold extremely well.



Commodity groups, by value, in Tulare County, 2013.

"Overall, the value was the biggest surprise to me," said Kinoshita, after the report presentation. "It was just a conglomeration of a lot of commodities doing well, with high yields and high prices.

"It's the third time in a row that we had the highest value ever," said Kinoshita, and the question became whether that makes Tulare County number one in ag production. "The odds are pretty good that Tulare County will get the number one ranking," she said.

Tulare County's ranking won't be known for about a month, until Kern County's crop report is released. Fresno's crop report shows a 2.2% drop to $6.4 billion for 2013.

Tulare County has been the number one ag exporter in the nation, with oranges and grapes being the top exports. That ranking is expected to continue.

"Per capita, Tulare County is always number one," said Assembly Member Connie Conway, who attended the supervisors' meeting to speak about a state water bond. "I want the crop report to be healthy every year, but for that we need water."

Supervisor Mike Ennis noted that Kern County has more farmland than Tulare County but, "most of the time, we out-produce them." He asked Kinoshita how we compared to Kern County. She responded that Kern County has increased their grapes by 4,500 acres but that they do not have as many dairies as we do. Because of that, she believes that Kern will probably not surpass Tulare County.

Supervisor Allen Ishida credited the transition into more permanent crops as the main reason for the increase in ag revenue in the county. He said there were 3,000 new acres in lemons.

Supervisor Steve Worthley noted the diversity of crops in the county and how many of them are valued at above $1 million – unlike other places such as in the Midwest that may have only one or two products with that value.

"It's mind-boggling how much per acre we produce compared to 1946," he said, noting that because of seed genetics and new procedures, production per acre has increased.

Supervisor Pete Vander Poel said that the impact of the drought will be cumulative, and that the impact can be seen in more crops being planted that require less water.

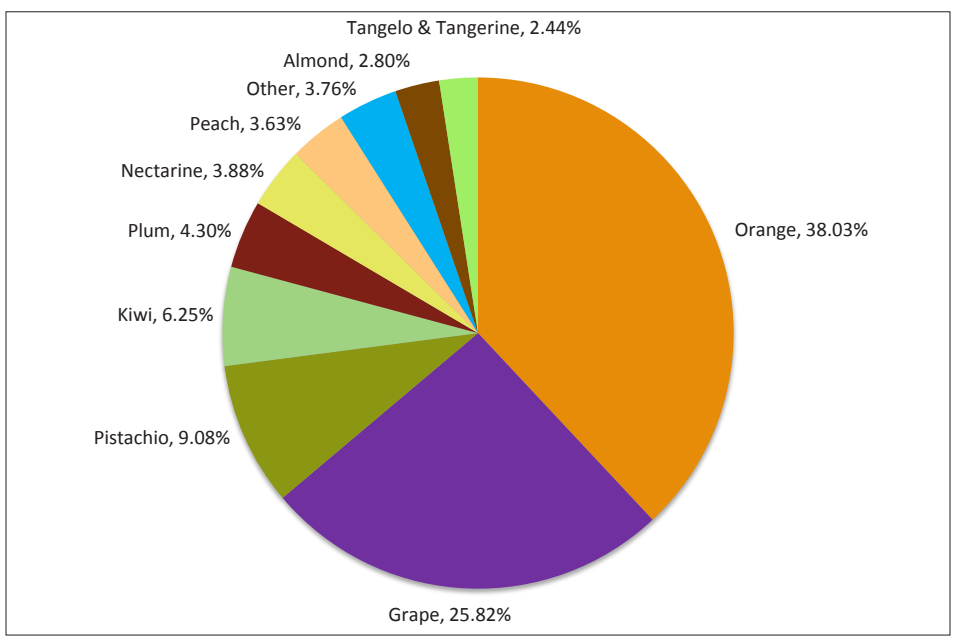
Supervisor Phil Cox commented that agriculture isn't really growing in the county. Farmers are just getting more money per acre. The acreage has actually gone down or stayed the same, but ag income has been growing in recent years.

"How can we maintain this growth?" asked Cox.

"Through water storage." Kinoshita replied. "if we have one more year without rain it will be very sad."

As the drought casts a gray cloud (or more accurately, no clouds) over crops in Tulare County, there is a silver lining. Kinoshita pointed out that prices go up for commodities during a drought because there is less product. It's the law of supply and demand.

Catherine Doe contributed to this article.



2013 Tulare County fruit and nut exports.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases Increase in State and South Valley

Staff Reports

Dr. Ron Chapman, director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and state health officer, said the number of reported sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in California increased in 2013, according to data made public this month.

"Sexually transmitted diseases can cause major health problems for people over time," said Dr. Chapman. "This increase is concerning, particularly because STDs are preventable."

The statewide data show that almost 168,000 cases of chlamydia, over 38,000 cases of gonorrhea, over 3,500 cases of primary and secondary (P&S) syphilis, almost 2,900 cases of early latent syphilis, and over 3,600 cases of late latent syphilis were reported in 2013, for a total of 216,000 reportable cases of STDs.

In 2013, the rates of gonorrhea and P&S syphilis (the most infectious stages) increased substantially compared to 2012. In 2013, the gonorrhea rate increased 13% to 100.4 per 100,000 population, and the P&S syphilis rate increased 18% to 9.3 per 100,000 population. In contrast, in 2013 the rate of chlamydia cases decreased slightly for the first time in almost two decades, to 439.5 per 100,000 population, Chlamydia is the most commonly reported disease in California.

In Tulare County, 2,360 cases of chlamydia were reported in 2013, in increase of 287 over 2012, and 762 more than in 2009. In Kings County, the number of reported cases was actually lower in 2013 than in 2012, 565 to 574.

Reported cases of gonorrhea increased more dramatically, from 170 in 2012 to 291 last year. In Kings County, the numbers more than doubled in that time, from 44 to 91. The cases of syphilis in the two counties, although much rarer than chlamydia and gonorrhea, also increased.

STD rates continue to be highest in young people 15-24 years of age, especially for females, with over 66% of female chlamydia cases and over 54% of female gonorrhea cases being in this narrow age group. Young women are the most vulnerable to infertility and other long-term reproductive health problems caused by STDs.

"Any sexually active person can get an STD through unprotected sex," said Chapman. "They should talk with their health care provider and ask if testing for STDs is appropriate." An online directory of test sites is available at findstdtest.org. Many clinics offer free tests.

Chapman pointed out that in addition to getting tested regularly, individuals can reduce their risk by using condoms, reducing their number of partners, being in a monogamous relationship or practicing abstinence.

Profound racial disparities persist. In 2013, the African-American gonorrhea rate of 351.1 per 100,000 was 6.2 times the non-Hispanic white rate of 56.9 per 100,000.

CDPH has been working to address health disparities in STDs. The STD Control Branch has identified census tracts with high numbers of gonorrhea cases and significant racial disparities and has focused interventions in these areas. In addition, the branch is collaborating with the Centers for Disease Control and California's Department of Education to reduce the high rates of STDs among youth through supporting comprehensive sex education, improving access to sexual health services, and helping schools build supportive environments for all youth, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students.

CDPH trains medical providers to assure that they are assessing their patients' risk for STDs, screening appropriately and using the most effective treatments. CDPH also works closely with local health jurisdictions to coordinate disease prevention and control efforts statewide, including helping identify infected individuals and assuring that they and their partners get treated.

More information about STDs is available on CDPH's website, www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/std/Pages/default.aspx.

Fat Preference Versus Real Acceptance

Laura Finley

The risk with any kind of binary-thinking is that there is no real room for difference. You are one or the other. The U.S. loves its binaries: black or white, man or woman, gay or straight. Such thinking misses the complexities of people, limiting us all into narrow boxes. Perhaps nowhere is binary-thinking more obvious today than in what has been called the "fat acceptance movement."

Building on decades of legitimate concern about body image and the ways that women and girls are constantly taught that they are too heavy, the fat acceptance movement has promoted a swing of the pendulum that is equally dangerous. Websites like *Upworthy* and *Huffington Post* repeatedly feature pictures and videos of women who are exerting their right to have more ample bodies. Ad nauseam, such sites reveal photo-shopped women and their real, less toned, bodies, mothers of four who wear with pride their sagginess, or heavier women wearing bikinis to show that it is OK. These images and articles are then re-posted on Facebook, tweeted across the universe, and otherwise slammed in our faces.

Of course it is OK to wear what you want despite your size! But that's not the point, or at least it shouldn't be. The goal of this fat acceptance movement, at least purportedly, is acceptance. To show that it should not be our bodies that determine our character. Yet too often these images and the dialogue that surrounds them say exactly that: that it is indeed your body that matters most, and if you happen to be thin you are simply not accepted. Being skinny and fit is equated with some deep flaw. You try too hard. You are too body conscious. You are weak and thus manipulated by the beauty industry. Blah, blah, blah.

Take, for instance, the conversation surrounding Miss Indiana's body in the 2014 Miss USA Pageant. Miss Indiana, MeKayla Diehl, who was widely praised for being "more curvy" than the other pageant contestants. She was described as having a "realistic body," which resulted in a full-on explosion of the Twitter universe, as women denounced the 5'8", size 4 Diehl as far from average, which they claim is 5'3" and a size 12. Enter the name-calling of skinny people, "twigs," "toothpicks," or "bag of bones."

And the divide continues, focusing on her body, on our bodies, and not on what we say or do. The discussion about whether Diehl is "normal" or "average" or whether a mother is healthier because she accepts her post-baby weight or works hard to lose it prevents us from moving to a place where we truly do not care, nor judge people, based on their height, weight or dress size.

We can do better.

Laura Finley, Ph.D., teaches in the Barry University Department of Sociology & Criminology and is syndicated by PeaceVoice.

Horoscope: Nothing New

Murphy

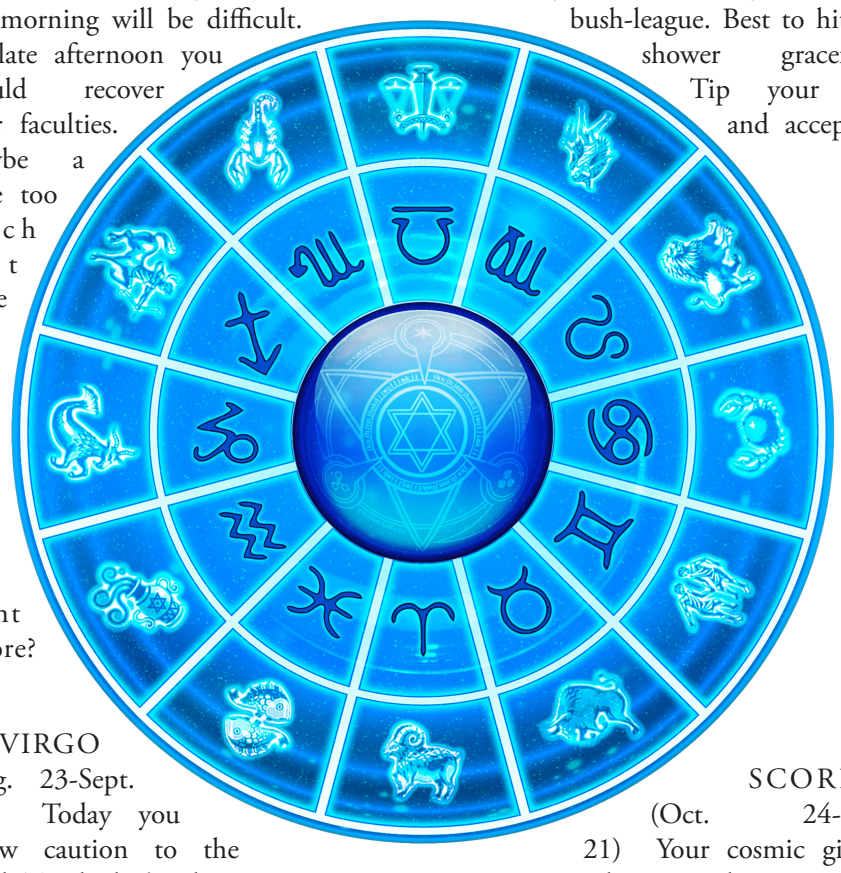
ARIES (March 21-April 19) In spite of your usual initiative, by afternoon you will find time to relax with friends. This will backfire. While you are busy seeking connections, you can't always anticipate what others want. Someone in your circle is tired of you. This is a good day not to answer your phone.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Grounded as you have always been, it will come as a shock to discover that a co-worker has no idea who you really are. Do not attempt to explain. Better to slip behind the scenes than be center stage when a work-related project fails.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21) Your objectivity usually knows no bounds. Today will be different. What once shone as equanimity will now be shown as ignorance. It turns out you never knew what you were talking about. A quiet tongue makes no mistakes.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) Sensitivity is your watchword. You are in touch with yourself and others. Everything will sour this afternoon. You must learn to mellow your harsh. It's never a good idea to use your loved ones' weaknesses against them.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Although you are adored for your zest for life, the morning will be difficult. By late afternoon you should recover your faculties. Maybe a little too much zest the night before?



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Today you throw caution to the wind. Too bad it's a hurricane out there. Where usually so pragmatic, by afternoon you'll be whistling past the graveyard of your best laid plans. Nobody will hear you in the howling blow.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) While normally team-oriented, today your team will trade you for someone you consider bush-league. Best to hit the shower gracefully. Tip your cap and accept it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21) Your cosmic gift is a tremendous psychic potential. Tonight you will ask yourself: Why didn't you see this coming?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) It is your natural inclination to lead, but sometimes the captain steers his ship onto the shoals. Taking a chance is always part of taking control. You know this. By noon your once proud vessel will be reduced to no better than a lifeboat.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You appreciate structure, but only to a certain point. Your sensual side threatens to bring everything down about your ears. You can prevent this by listening to a loved one. Sometimes no really does mean no.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Your detachment is legendary. Have your retinas examined immediately.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Resourcefulness fills your world view, as does imagination. Like the song famously says, "Imagine no possessions." Then you really will need to be resourceful.

View upcoming events and see stories from past *Valley Voice* issues at ourvalleyvoice.com

CEMEX

Continued from p. 1

filling the recharge trench. Groundwater levels had dropped in 2011, but no resident's well water level dropped and no wells ran dry. Nevertheless, EMKO Environmental concluded that the private wells went dry due to the drought.

Forty-two wells have gone dry in rural Tulare County because of the drought, but that is not an issue in this foothill region. Lemon Cove doesn't have a water problem. Lake Kaweah sits right above the town, and the Kaweah River, which is running right now, runs through it. The Wutchumna and Lemon Cove Ditches, along with several others, and the ponds created by CEMEX, are brimming full of water.

A dry groundwater recharging trench.

During a meeting in March between the effected residents and RMA, the private well owners said that the RMA agreed to do their own independent hydrology report. But then the RMA reneged on their promise. "The RMA got scared to run their own peer review because it's a huge multinational corporation. RMA decided to hide instead," said Lemon Cove property and business owner Tom Cairns.

Mike Spata, director of the RMA, begs to differ. He said that his department has been working extensively on this issue for months and that the RMA plans on doing a full peer review. Spata said that the CUP says its CEMEX' responsibility to hire the hydrologist to make a report, but that it is the RMA's responsibility to review the accuracy and data in the report, and all other evidence while doing their peer review. He said that the evidence will lead to the right conclusions and will be presented in a public hearing where everyone will get their say.

Rob and Sissy Morton and family in front of their dry well.

Spata did recognize that it is CEMEX' position that the wells dried up due to the drought, but that is not necessarily the RMA's position. RMA will not take a position on why the residents' wells went dry, or prematurely order CEMEX to fill the recharge trench, until after a professional and thorough review of the evidence is completed.

"These are complex engineering questions and cannot have superficial answers" said Spata.

Lemon Cove Residents Address the Board of Supervisors

To the residents whose wells have gone dry there is nothing complex about it. Their wells were running fine when the recharge trench was full, and they went dry soon after CEMEX stopped filling the trench. After the effected residents submitted written complaints and participated in two meetings without result, they went to the July 8 Tulare County Board of Supervisors meeting to voice their discontent. Dick Polly of Lemon Cove described the problem, "Our wells are in a aquifer that is from 12 to 20 feet deep along the original Kaweah River bank. A boulder layer allows the water to flow from the northeast along the river bank to our wells. The Stillwell Lake is 60 feet deep and covers more than 30 acres. A giant hole was excavated 60 feet deep in the Stillwell site due north and west of our wells. The hole is now a lake that contains at least 1,000 acre-feet of water drained from the aquifer our wells depend on for water."

In other words, the lake is deeper than their wells, and has sucked them dry. George Clausen, of Woodlake, pointed out that water sitting idle in CEMEX' ponds evaporates every day, "and that is water that Tulare County will never get back."

Drought or no drought, CEMEX has already acknowledged that their pond sucks the water from the residents' wells. Otherwise, why would it have constructed a recharge trench and spent eight years keeping it full of water? But on September 4, 2013, the wiring to the pumps was stolen for the second time. The decision was made to not fix the pumps and thus discontinue filling the recharge trench. That's when the underground water levels started plummeting. Instead of investing in putting the wiring underground to thwart metal thieves, CEMEX now conveniently uses the drought as an excuse not to fix the pumps.

Rob and Sissy Morton's private well water is usually at six to eight feet. Now that the trench is dry the water has fallen to 16 feet three inches. Their well goes down to 16 feet 10 inches. This means the water just trickles in. They can pump about two gallons of water before just sucking up air. After a few minutes, they can get two more gallons of water and then air again. It used to take three or four minutes to fill their pressure tank that supplies their house with water, but now that requires 45 minutes. It takes a half an hour of pumping just to get enough water in their tank to do a load of dishes.

Rob Morton has resorted to hauling home water given to him from friends and relatives just to do the family's laundry. They conserve the little water they get from their well for the toilettes or to take a shower once a week. "You know most people take a shower every day," said Morton.

The Mortons used to have a vegetable garden to help with their food bill but have not been able to plant since January.

This has fallen hard on Morton's wife, Sissy. Sissy Morton has a genetic condition called polycystic kidney disease and has to do peritoneal dialysis at home three times a week. She also has to do Hemodialisis several times a week at a clinic. Dialysis has to be done in completely sanitary environment and to do that they need water. "Our water situation has become a life or death situation," said Rob Morton, "It's been extremely stressful. The hardest part is watching my wife suffer."

Sissy Morton performing peritoneal dialysis at home.

Down the dirt road from the Mortons live Mary and Orville Cloud. Their well goes down 25 feet and they have never had a problem in the 17 years they have lived there. In January, their well went completely dry and they now depend on friends to supply them with water.

Orville Cloud wrote a letter of complaint, went to the meeting in March with RMA, and the meeting in May with CEMEX. "I didn't think much of the meetings. I don't think they were for us in any way, shape, or form." The Clouds had to give up their extensive garden, and this has made their food bills go up more than their social security can stretch to cover.

Though CEMEX claims that its mining and reclamation activities have nothing to do with the decreased water levels in neighboring wells, at the county's request CEMEX made the following offer: "Although it has no obligation to do so, as part of CEMEX' good neighbor operations, CEMEX is willing to provide the landowners with financial assistance as contained herein in connection with the installation of a single shared private well." In the agreement, CEMEX offered four residents up to $12,000, to pay for half of the cost of digging a communal well to supply water to their homes. The agreement would not pay for hooking the homes up to the communal well nor for the balance of the well if the cost went over $24,000.

Mary and Orville Cloud in their dry garden

Elias Rodriguez and his wife, who is blind, stated the following to the board of supervisors: "We are a poor farmworker family with little income and we are being asked to spend a very large amount of money on a new well sometime in the future just to keep our home, when historically the hydrology report showed no severe loss of water levels during the past nine years until this year. Well drillers are backlogged for two to three years right now. So this offer will not help our water problem right now."

The board of supervisors listened intently to each person's testimony and, through the RMA, made priority number one "getting these people water," said Spata. Concurrently, the RMA will be gathering the information to solve the problem. Spata was hopeful that through the several drought relief programs there would be the resources to include the Lemon Cove residents with others in Tulare County whose wells have gone dry.

The Conditional Use Permit

The Stillwell Project Permit was issued in 1998 and requires CEMEX to comply with a series of conditions. Number 49 in the Conditions of Approval states, "the project shall not affect the water level, yield or quality, of any well both during the mining operations and subsequently as a reclaimed site. Upon receipt of a written complaint from any owner of a pre-existing well which details an alleged impact to the well's water level, yield, or water quality, the RMA shall request a report from a licensed hydrogeologist explaining the problem. If a significant problem can be professionally demonstrated by a licensed hydrogeologist to be caused by mining activities, then immediate action must be taken to correct the condition, which may include, but is not limited to, modifying the recharge ditches to provide more recharge capacity, reducing the amount of pit de-watering, or if necessary, ceasing mining operations."

Besides stating very clearly that the RMA needs to hire an independent hydrologist to do a report it also obviates what Martin Rodriguez said to the BOS, "The simple solution to our well problem is to pump water into the recharge trenches now. Condition 49 is written in clear English. If it is not followed, then all permit conditions in Tulare County are null and void."

Orville Cloud said it best when addressing the board of supervisors during public comment. "Our aquifer is now dry and the CEMEX lake is slowly filling. No amount of rainfall or river flow will put water in our well again as long as the CEMEX lake level is far below the level of our well."

As for Spata, he asks, "Is the empty ditch the problem? We have unanswered questions and the RMA is not going to take a position until after the peer review is completed."

Part two will focus on another, older gravel mine within a mile of the Stillwell Project, which may be about to cause similar problems. The ponds occuring in Lemon Cove could be indicative of the potential problems caused by the McKay's Point project.

Building Permits Continue to Increase

Staff Reports

Tulare County officials announced last week that building permit requests for residential housing in the county soared during the recently completed fiscal year 2013-14, and the value of construction permits issued increased as well.

"During the last 12 months, the county has issued 66% more permits for single family homes in the unincorporated areas," said Phil Cox, chairman of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. "We've also seen a substantial growth in economic activity and commercial building. Although we are not in direct competition with cities for housing, this is a clear sign of an improving economy."

County records show 3,116 building permits were issued in FY 2013-14 – representing projects with a total construction value of $141.6 million. That represents a 4.75% growth in building permit values over the previous fiscal year, when county officials processed 3,266 permits worth a total value of $135.2 million.

County economic development officials say this represents an average 7.25% increase in construction permit values over the last three fiscal years.

"The value of county building permits issued last fiscal year increased by $6.4 million over the value of permits issued during the prior 12 month period," Cox said. "Tulare County's effort to work closer with clients and businesses either looking to locate to Tulare County or expand their existing operations is exceeding our board's expectations. We are very happy with the hard work our own team puts in everyday to grow Tulare County."

"This is significant and sustained growth over a three-year period," said County Administrator Jean Rousseau. "We believe some of that growth is due to our countywide effort to be become more business friendly."

What's changed? Two years ago, the board of supervisors established an in-house economic development program to foster value growth. Challenged to make the county easier to do business with, planning administrators developed a team-based approach toward business development. For example, if someone wanted to "fast-track" construction of a medical clinic, or expand a large ag processing facility on an aggressive timeline, the county developed a "new" team-based process to accommodate that developer's needs.

Tulare County Economic Development Manager Michael Washam said much of the increase in new construction occurred in four business sectors: renewable energy, retail commercial, agriculture and healthcare.

"We have tried to focus on what we are good at, and our county has made a strong commitment to encourage agri-business expansion," Washam said. "Our county is also one of the few in the state that has an expedited permitting process developed specifically for renewable energy projects."

Construction continues on approved utility scale solar projects. In the last 12 months, Tulare County has issued building permits for $7.3 million worth of solar projects, and additional renewable energy growth is expected this year.

"The county recently issued permits worth $4.3 million for the Pixley biogas project and another $1.1 million permit for an innovative carbon dioxide capture plant, a state-of-the-art facility that produces food-grade CO2 used in carbonated drinks," Washam said.

Building permits are currently pending for the Atwell Island West solar project recently purchased by Con Edison Development.

In addition to renewable energy projects, Setton Farms pulled more than $2 million-worth of permits for plant expansions; Paramount Citrus expanded greenhouse facilities with $4.9 million in permits; Family Health Care Network's new rural medical clinic in Terra Bella and a thorough renovation and expansion of its Porterville clinic represent a combined permit value of $1.7 million. Also approved is Tulare Community Health Center's new medical clinic in Woodville, resulting in another $550,000 in permits.

Family Dollar, Auto Zone, Dollar General and Tulare Firestone Tires have all built new stores in the unincorporated area of Tulare County during the past 12 months – a combined $3.6 million in permit value.

The planned McDonald's restaurant in Earlimart will be the first in the Western U.S. to use this new architectural design.

McDonald's to Build New-Design Restaurant at White River Plaza in Earlimart

Steve Pastis

White River Plaza, the new retail commercial development situated on a 7.3-acre parcel along Highway 99 in Earlimart, continues to grow. The newest tenant is McDonald's, which plans to start construction on a state-of-the art restaurant there late this year or early next year.

Billed as "a destination place, a neighborhood place, a familiar place," White River Plaza has had its share of attention in recent months. AutoZone opened the doors of its 7,500-square-foot building in the development with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on December 12. Dollar General opened the doors of its 9,100-square-foot building there with its own ribbon-cutting ceremony on February 15.

In May, the McDonald's Corporation approved plans for the construction of a restaurant in White River Plaza that will be approximately 4,000 square feet and include a drive-thru component. Late last month, a McDonald's construction team met with Michael Washam, Tulare County economic development manager, and other county officials at a project review committee meeting to discuss the construction phase of the restaurant.

"All went well and McDonald's current plan calls for breaking ground during the first quarter of 2015 and to open later in the year, however, Patrick Diffley, area construction manager for McDonald's USA, indicated that the schedule could be moved forward to the fourth quarter of 2014," said Washam. "McDonald's is going to build a new restaurant design that will be the first of its kind in the Western United States."

Eric Coyne of the Tulare County economic development office noted the new jobs that McDonald's will bring to the area. "These are jobs with a certain corporate structure and training. These are things you take with you to bigger and better things." He added that with its three main tenants, the plaza now has the top national food restaurant (McDonald's), the top general merchandise store (Dollar General) and the top auto parts store (AutoZone).

"Once you have premium tenants, other businesses – the mom and pop's – want to be there in the high traffic area," Coyne said. "Those other spots are going to fill up quickly."

White River Plaza was approved by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors in 2013. The project is being developed by two local economic development professionals, Tom Hocking and Max Bacerra.

Efforts are underway to add a national branded gas station, additional fast food restaurants (sandwich and pizza), specialty sit-down restaurants, a full-service grocery store, family and children's clothing stores, business services, beauty and grooming services, additional retail stores, a pharmacy and entertainment.

"We don't fit an urban model," said Washam, explaining that most retail businesses are concerned with the population within a three-mile radius. "Here it may be 10-12 miles."

Businesses, such as McDonald's, also benefit from having their sign visible along Highway 99.

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Employees

Continued from p. 1

portfolio to present to a state senator or assembly member. That legislator would then present their case to the audit committee to be put on their agenda.

The next round of negotiations will be July 21. The original deadline to sign a contract was June 30, but that was extended to July 7. Currently, the employees are working without a contract. According to Salazar, neither party asked to extend the deadline past July 7, but neither party wants to see a strike either. As of this time, neither side has declared that they have given their last and final offer. But if an agreement is not reached, the BOS can declare an impasse and impose their own conditions on the employees. The Fresno City Council recently took a similar action with Fresno firefighters when negotiations came to a standstill and the city declared an impasse.

The negotiations in Tulare County are moving forward and an impasse is very unlikely.

Briefly...

District Elections Presentation Slated for July 21 Visalia City Council Meeting

A presentation on the process for establishing districts for district elections in the City of Visalia will be given at the July 21 Visalia City Council meeting, which begins at 7pm at City Hall, 707 W. Acequia Ave.

Doug Johnson of National Demographics Corporation (NDC) will provide a presentation that will begin the process of establishing districts for election of city council members by district beginning in 2016. During his presentation, he will review the data that will be used to develop district options, what criteria the city council may want to have considered as the districts are developed, and a timeline for public input and adoption of the districts. He will be looking for specific input from the council on the criteria to be used in developing the three district options NDC will provide.

Districting criteria includes the following legal requirements: equal population within the districts; compliance with the Federal Voting Rights Act; and race cannot be the "predominate factor." The city council can also choose to direct that other criteria be considered. In other communities, optional criteria has included, but not been limited to, communities of interest; visible features; compact and contiguous districts, avoid pairing of incumbents; and planned population growth.

The City of Visalia will hold city council elections in even years beginning in 2016. Adoption of district lines is expected to be made by June 2015 to give potential candidates and the public a full year to become familiar with the districts prior to the 2016 election-filing period. Three council seats will be up for election in 2016, and two in 2018.

Leadership Tulare Applications Accepted until July 31

Leadership Tulare is now accepting applications for it class of 2014-15. The program helps develop individuals who want to become knowledgeable about the city and are concerned about its well-being. Leadership Tulare, a ten-month program, begins with a retreat in September and includes monthly day-long sessions plus additional lunch and evening sessions. The committee plans the details of each session, solicits sponsorship funding, and recruits applicants for successive program years.

Applications are due Thursday, July 31. For an application or more information, visit www.tularechamber.org/pages/LeadershipTulare or call the chamber at 686-1547.

Provost & Pritchard Ranked Fourth in Nation as 'Best Civil Engineering Firm to Work For'

Civil Engineering News recently ranked Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group fourth among the "Best Civil Engineering Firms to Work For" nationwide in 2014. The firm was also ranked tenth overall in the Top 100 of all architecture, structural engineering, civil engineering, environmental and multidiscipline firms in the United States and Canada. This is the 12th year Provost & Pritchard has been on the "Best Firms" list since the award program began in 2001.

"Being recognized by CE News as a great place to work is an honor that reflects why Provost & Pritchard is able to recruit and retain quality staff who can successfully work with our valued clients," said Dale Melville, Provost & Pritchard president.

Established in 1968, Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group has office locations in Fresno, Clovis, Visalia, Bakersfield, Modesto, Los Banos and Chico.

Rotary Presentation to Focus on Increasing Literacy

International award-winning teacher Jean Irwin will talk about the importance of literacy and reading to young children in a special presentation at the noon meeting of The Rotary Club of Visalia on Wednesday, July 23, at the Visalia Marriott.

Irwin is a retired teacher of the deaf. She taught preschool through 12th grade, earned a master's degree from Nottingham University, and has helped her deaf students to achieve high reading levels. She is now focused on helping to develop literacy programs through Rotary as the District 5190 Literacy Chair and Rotary Youth Programs.

She was named "Reading Teacher of the Year" by the International Reading Association and she has become a popular speaker within education and Rotary, thanks to her humor and engaging style. Irwin has spoken to more than 250 conferences.

The special presentation, a combined effort of eight local Rotary clubs, is open to non-members, and attendees will be able to buy their lunch. Reservations are required by calling Visalia Rotary President Rocky Pipkin at 622-8889, or Patrick Isherwood of Tulare Sunrise Rotary at 300-5899.

No Change in El Niño Predictions

To follow up from an article in the July 3 issue of the *Valley Voice*, the El Niño Watch update issued on July 10 by the Climate Prediction Center of the National Weather Service states, "The chance of El Niño is about 70% during the Northern Hemisphere summer and is close to 80% during the fall and early winter."So no change in the weather predictions since the July 3 article. The next update will be issued on August 7.

Rev. John A. Buehrens to Address Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Reverend John A. Buehrens will speak to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Visalia about "Religion and Human Rights" on Sunday, July 27, in the Visalia Friends Meetinghouse, 17208 Avenue 296. The service is scheduled from 5-6pm, and admission is free.

A graduate of Harvard and Harvard Divinity, and ordained in 1973, Rev. Buehrens has served congregations across the country, including New York, Massachusetts, Tennessee, Texas, and his most recent post on California's Monterey Peninsula. He also served as sixth president of the Unitarian Universalist Association from 1993 to 2001.

He has authored and co-authored many significant books on the faith, including *A Chosen Faith: An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism*, *A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-First Century*, *Understanding the Bible: An Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers and Religious Liberals*, and *Unitarians and Universalists in America: A People's History*. His local visit is scheduled between his study tour of Unitarianism in Poland and his new assignment in San Francisco.

A potluck supper and conversation follow the service. For more information, visit www.uuvisalia.org.

Two in Lemoore Among 2014 Next-Generation Pharmacist Finalists

Parata Systems and Pharmacy Times announced the finalists for the 2014 Next-Generation Pharmacist awards. Now in its fifth year, the awards recognize pharmacy leaders across a wide range of practice settings, and this year the program attracted more than 500 entries.

Finalists and winners in each category will be recognized at the August 24 Innovation and Inspiration gala event in Boston where healthy aging pioneer Dr. James F. Fries of Stanford University School of Medicine will celebrate and encourage the gathering with his keynote address, "Pharmacists Helping Patients Live Well."

Lt. Cmdr. Vince Deguzman, PharmD, MBA, MSC, FACHE, U.S. Navy, Naval Hospital Lemoore Pharmacy, is a finalist in the Military Pharmacist category. In the Rising Star category, Mary Jane Magno, CPhT, Naval Hospital Lemoore Pharmacy, is a finalist.

Eagle Mountain Casino Names New General Manager, Marketing Director

Eagle Mountain Casino in Porterville announced the promotion of Matthew Mingrone to the position of general manager. He has replaced Tom Stewart, who recently retired.

Mingrone joined Eagle Mountain Casino in November 2009 as the marketing director. He has 23 years of experience in marketing within the gaming industry. During his career, he also served as marketing director for Bay Mills Resort and Casinos in Brimley, Michigan, Odawa Casino Resort in Petoskey, Michigan, and Chinook Winds Casino Resort in Lincoln City, Oregon.

Replacing Mingrone as marketing director is Renee Garcia. She has been promoted from the marketing manager position. She grew up in Visalia and graduated from Fresno State with a bachelor of science degree in business. Garcia began her marketing career with Chukchansi Resort & Casino before coming on board at Eagle Mountain in 2005.

Bank of the Sierra Names Alice Gray as Vice President

Bank of the Sierra has named Alice Gray as vice president, director of deposit services. In her new position, Gray will oversee initial and technical selling of deposit services to commercial and municipal customers.

Gray was most recently employed by Bank of the West as vice president, Central California/Nevada area sales manager. Prior to that, she was vice president, client relationship agribusiness manager for Rabobank, N.A.

"With our enhanced technology and cash management services, Alice will work alongside our area managers and branch teams to fully realize this new potential," said Kevin McPhaill, president and COO.

Verdesian Life Sciences Acquires Specialty Fertilizer Products

Verdesian Life Sciences announced that it has acquired Specialty Fertilizer Products, a Leawood, Kansas-based company focused on fertilizer efficiency products. The transaction benefits customers by building on Verdesian's history of bringing new, intellectually protected and patented products to market.

Verdesian Life Sciences is a plant health and nutrition company with patented biological, nutritional, seed treatment and inoculant technologies that help specialty and row crop growers and turf management professionals maximize their nitrogen and phosphorus investments. Founded in 2012 to acquire and grow plant health product companies, Verdesian is based in Cary, North Carolina, with production and manufacturing facilities in Visalia.

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Fax 559-592-2071
John and Diane Guinn

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New State Law Allows Farmers' Markets to Offer Wine Tasting

Staff Reports

On July 9th, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law AB 2488 by Assembly Member Marc Levine (D-San Rafael). The bill immediately allows limited wine and cider tasting at certified farmers' markets.

AB 2488 takes effect immediately to allow sales during the current season. The new privilege is subject to a number of safeguards.

Market managers now have the discretion to allow tastings at their specific market. Only one winery on any given day may offer tastings. The tastings must occur in a corded-off area of the market. Additionally, the grower is limited to pour no more than three ounces of wine or cider per adult consumer.

Farmers' markets in Visalia, Tulare, Lindsay and Hanford are unlikely to immediately offer wine or cider tasting, however.

The Visalia Farmers' Market Board of Directors oversees Saturday morning markets outside the Sequoia Mall in Visalia, as well as those in Downtown Visalia on Thursday nights and in Downtown Tulare on Tuesday nights. If the board approves wine tasting, it could be offered at all three markets, including the one on Saturday mornings.

"If somebody is looking to buy a bottle of, let's say, blueberry wine, they probably want to taste it at any time of day," said Market Manager Naomi Alberstein, who added that a winemaker who sells at all three of their markets is interested in offering wine tastings. She has also received inquiries from two other winemakers.

"I think it's a fabulous thing for our local wineries to get their wines out there, but it won't happen (at our farmers' market) this season if at all," said Summer Headley, events coordinator for Main Street Hanford, which sponsors Thursday Night Marketplace, billed as "much more than just a farmers' market." The marketplace includes a beer garden, which is why there is little interest in adding wine tasting.

Virginia Loya, director of the Lindsay Friday Night Market, said that event could offer wine tasting "maybe in the future," but added that the Lindsay City Council would have to approve it.

"Traditionally, wine, like many products, is sold through sampling," said Paul Kronenberg, president of the Family Winemakers of California. "Consumers want to understand the wine, decide if they like it, and decide if it is a good value."

"AB 2488 is win-win-win for wineries and cider makers, consumers, and the certified farmers' markets," said Mike Falasco, vice president of the Wine Institute.

"I thank Governor Brown for his signature on this legislation," said Levine. "The farmers' market shopping experience involves tasting the products. AB 2488 is a common sense solution that simply allows tastings at certified farmers' markets where winemakers are already allowed to sell their products."

Reclamite Road Projects Underway in Visalia

Staff Reports

Reclamite pavement street maintenance projects, which began July 12-13, will continue from 7am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday, July 19-20 and July 26-27, in the Industrial Park area of Visalia, from Shirk west to Camp Drive, and Highway 198 north to Avenue 320.

Reclamite seal consists of an application of an asphalt rejuvenating agent, made up of petroleum oils and sand, which provides a simple, one-step method for restoring and preserving durability in asphalt, extending the life of newly constructed pavement, and for corrective maintenance on deteriorated pavements. Once the rejuvenating emulsion has penetrated the existing pavement surface, a coating of dry sand is applied to the surface to decrease tracking of the oils and provide additional skid resistance. The remaining oiled sand not absorbed into the existing pavement is then swept by a street sweeper.

All vehicles, traffic and parked cars must be off the streets that will be reclamited by 7am. The contractor will close the street and apply the rejuvenator with oil. About two hours after it is applied, a sand blotter will be applied to reduce tracking. Traffic or parked cars will not be allowed on the streets until after the sand has been applied. Speed must be held to a minimum for several days to reduce the chance of picking-up rejuvenator and sand on your vehicles.

Updates will be made on the city's Facebook and Twitter pages, and at www.ci.visalia.ca.us/depts/public_works/streets. For more information, visit www.reclamite.com.

The Long Hot Days of Summer Contribute to Local Crime

Nancy Vigran

Summertime, with its longer days, warmer nights and no school for a couple of months, seems like a great time of year.

But there is a rise in some types of crime in the summer, and those longer days, warmer nights and no school have a lot to do with it, said Sergeant Osvaldo Dominguez, public information officer for the Visalia Police Department.

"Idle time for kids is never a good thing," he said.

There are a lot of juvenile and gang-related problems in the summertime, he said. These problems include assaults of all kinds, as well as shootings and stabbings. And another set of crimes generally attributed to juveniles is malicious mischief. This is the defacing or destruction of property by tagging with spray paint, breaking windows and other marring of property without burglarizing.

It is not just that it is hot. It is that the days are long and the weather is nice throughout the night.

"They have all day and all night to do whatever they want to do," Dominguez said.

More crimes of opportunity can also occur, like burglaries and theft when families are out of town and property is left unattended, he added.

"The best prevention is awareness," he said. "As soon as you see something, let us know. These are usually not random acts."

Dominguez recommends letting your "trusted" neighbors know if you are going out of town. He warned, however, that some neighbors can be the source of problems rather than prevention, so consider who you are speaking with regarding your plans.

A Tulare County Sheriff's Department comparison of home burglaries, auto burglaries and malicious mischief within the county for the past few years reveals a definite increase of auto break-ins and thefts from cars during the summer months. The more people are out and about, the more their cars are too. Also, there are more vehicles parked in general locations where events are taking place, explained Meagan Rapozo, public information officer for the Tulare County Sheriff's Department.

There is also an increase in residential burglaries during the warmer months. In part, due to windows and doors being left open.

One easily preventable crime that rises with warmer temperatures, is that of scam and bunco artists. Beware of someone offering unsolicited repairs for home, driveway or car. Report this type of solicitation to your local law enforcement office.

Summer crimes may also include business and agricultural property, although whether they are really higher in summer versus other times of the year is hard to determine, Rapozo said.

"There really isn't an easy answer for ag-related crime," she said.

Often agricultural crime may not be discovered for a while. For example, fuel theft could occur in the summer, but may not be discovered for weeks or even months, until a particular vehicle is to be used again. Only then does the owner or worker find there is nothing in the tank, she said.

"It is just what and when people are noticing it, more than anything," she said.

Both Rapozo and Dominguez also referred to the ongoing problem of copper theft from businesses, as well as residences and municipal facilities as well. While this is not a seasonal problem, it remains in the forefront of theft-related crimes.

Dominguez also commented that in many incidences, it is the same criminals repeating the same offenses over and over again. And although the same offenders keep repeating the same types of crimes, the victims are often different.

Most prevention is common sense. Lock up valuables. Be aware of the surroundings, even more so at night. Do not leave valuables in the car, and park cars in well-lit areas whenever possible. Let a responsible person know when you family is to be away, and have them check on things often and make it look as though someone is at home.

And while there may be an increase of crimes in the summer, generally, crime rates are down from what they were six or seven years ago, Dominguez said.

Figures from the Tulare County Sheriff's office concur.

"The long-term trend is that we are doing much better," he said. "But we cannot predict what this summer will

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Viewpoint

Nothing New under the Gaza-Sderot Sun

Julia Chaitin

The temperatures keep rising in the hot Gaza-Sderot region; after all it's July. But it's not the heat that is making our lives unbearable; it's the renewed terrifying and senseless violence that within 24 hours spun out of control, affecting Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and points further north. It's the 'here we go again' lethal ping-pong of Israeli bombings in Gaza and rocket attacks on Israeli communities.

In the south, we knew that after Prime Minister Netanyahu declared the Hamas responsible for the murder last month of the three boys – Naftali, Gilad and Eyal – Israelis lucky enough to have 'safe rooms' would soon be running in their direction. Even though the intelligence branch of the army knew that the terrorists came from Hebron, the air force was sent to punish Gaza. This is the script we know by heart: we go in and bomb, they respond with rockets.

It is not always satisfying to be in the know.

We in the south have learned that the occasional periods of 'quiet' are only temporary. For years, nothing has changed. The blockade on Gaza continues, there is no direct contact between the Hamas and Israeli governments, and the hatred of Israelis and Palestinians toward one another has only grown, since we have no opportunities to get to know one another, as ordinary people.

Even though many Israeli politicians have succeeded in convincing most Israelis that we must hate our Gazan neighbors, some of us refuse to believe this 'given'. I belong to a grassroots organization, Other Voice, which tries to break this cycle of hatred and violence. Our members all live and work in the area close to the Gaza border. We keep in ongoing contact with friends in Gaza via phone, e-mail, Facebook and Skype – even during these times of war. We share stories about our families and our lives. We hear how Gaza has become a nightmare. When rockets are fired onto our communities, they contact us to hear if we are safe. We connect through our common experiences of suffering and despair, though we Israelis know that for as bad as we have it, our neighbors have it tenfold worse.

On rare occasions, when a friend manages to secure a permit to enter Israel (for example, to go for needed hospital treatment or to attend school abroad), we meet face to face. We are able to look into one another's eyes, and to give one another a hug. We have the extraordinary opportunity to eat lunch together at the café at the Yad Mordechai junction. We become 'normal' neighbors, even in only for one hour.

Unfortunately, we have not succeeded in convincing many Israelis to join us in a non-violent path out of this madness. We are usually perceived as being naïve (at the least) or as traitors (at the worst), for not demanding that Gaza be leveled to the ground.

Up until yesterday, we who live our lives in a war zone had two options: either live life close to/in a 'safe room', or for those who do not have one, leave for 'safe ground' when the violence erupts. This second option more or less disappeared yesterday when we learned that the Hamas and the Islamic Jihad possess rockets that can reach distances of 160 kilometers.

But even though most of Israel is now in rocket range, it is still wise for those in the south to have an escape plan. It is crucial to maintain good relations with friends and family who live in the northern areas of the country, or to have money for a hotel room when the tzivei adom (red alerts) play their familiar tune. If neither of these are possibilities, then one can hope that kibbutzim in the north will open their doors until things calm down. It is also important to have two suitcases packed – one for winter and one for summer, because when the attacks begin again, you will neither have the peace of mind, nor time, to put in t-shirts when it's hot or sweaters when it's cold. Being prepared can be the difference between remaining sane or becoming traumatized, or worse, between living and dying.

While we Israelis are able to plan ahead, at least to some extent, our Gazan neighbors do not have this luxury; they have nowhere to run, and nowhere to hide. Our friends tell us that during renewed violence, they congregate in their family home, hoping that if the end is near, at least they will be with their loved ones. I would not want to live the kind of life that they have – being terrorized by the Hamas dictatorship, blockaded by Israel, regularly attacked by the Israeli air force, locked out of Egypt, and forgotten by most of the world.

However, I am far from happy with my life on this side of the border. Our 'leaders' have knowingly put us in harm's way, while spinning a story that we are protected by the Iron Domes and that by "continuing to be strong," we will prevail. We are supposed to be grateful and feel secure, and thank our 'leaders' for wreaking havoc on the civilian population in Gaza. We are supposed to thank our army for bombing 160 targets last night in Gaza that left 24 dead and hundreds wounded – a number of them innocent men, women and children.

Psycho-social research on the long-term effects of inter-group conflict has shown that by keeping people separated from one another, reinforcing distrust of the enemy, and repeating negative stereotypes of people that are not "one of us," short-term conflicts become long-term intractable ones. Furthermore, when societies are caught up in such perceptions, they only see themselves as victims, losing the ability to imagine a future of peace with the monstrous 'other'. We become convinced that our 'enemy' is sub-human and that this 'reality' is our fate.

Life along the Gaza-Sderot border is a living example of these research findings.

In Ecclesiastes (1: 9-11), it is written that: What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

In our region, innocent Israelis and Palestinians are being burnt by the rounds of endless revenge. Every boom, every siren chips away another piece of our soul. We are told that history has proven that our peoples can never live together in peace, and that we will only be safe, when the other is destroyed. We in Other Voice say that revenge has run its course. It is time for Israelis and Palestinians to find ways to bask together in the sun of this once beautiful area, and re-write the future history books.

I definitely feel the need for coffee.

Putting Community First

Kermit Wullschleger

My mother grew up on a farm in Kansas, one of nine children. My grandfather, R.W. Young, had bought an old farmhouse and property before the depression that nobody wanted. He eventually moved to Wichita, Kansas in the thirties, where he worked as a cattle stockbroker, served as a minister and helped build the church I was raised in as a child. My mother served as waitress at the Fox Den on Douglass Street in Wichita; my father had a radio repair shop down the street, and would walk to the Fox Den everyday for lunch where he eventually met my mother. Soon after, they were married, eventually raising 13 children.

I moved to Los Angeles from Wichita in 1974 to find my fame and fortune, and lived there for the next 15 years. In 1988, I was married and realized that I needed to attend graduate school if I wanted to be in the field of social work. At the same time, my wife needed to complete her teaching credential, and Fresno State was the perfect fit for both of us. Los Angeles never felt like home for a kid from Kansas. Moving to Fresno to attend Fresno State, and a year later to Visalia, felt like home--the midwest, where I grew up.

Maybe I'm being naive, but coming from a place like Wichita, I tended to think of Visalia and this part of California as being like Mayberry RFD--that television show we watched decades ago, where folks help other folks whenever there was need. People looked out for those less fortunate than themselves. Folks were compelled to do the right thing.

Living in Visalia has been a rewarding experience. My wife and I have been able to raise our family here. The schools have been outstanding (Royal Oaks, Green Acres and Redwood) and my children have made lifelong friends. Music and sports are superior at every level. There are many wonderful places to worship. There is a magnificent Main Street in Visalia, and farmers' markets in Lindsay and all across this county every week. The beautiful Sequoias and Kings Canyon are close by.

Working as an employee of Tulare County since 1989 has also been a rewarding experience. I've been privileged to have met many wonderful workers here from all different areas of county work including adult protection, in-home supportive workers, eligibility workers, janitorial, office assistants, countless child welfare services social workers, cooks in the kitchen at the county jail, therapists, sheriff's officers and CWS-nurses.

When Pete Vander Poel was running for his seat from District Two of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, he stated the following, "the responsibility of government is to serve people. The individuals that we elect to government offices to represent us should be in it to represent interests of their constituents and not their own." If only the entire Board of Supervisors would take Pete's words seriously and realize that investing in the Tulare County workforce is indeed putting the needs of their constituents first. Unfortunately, the Board, over the length of Mr. Vander Poel's term in office and those prior, have a pattern of executive compensation which translates into ongoing raises for themselves, their executive management, and their current County Administrative Officer, Jean Rousseau (now receiving over $200,000 a year in salary and benefits) in a county where the poverty rate is over 25%. Salary and compensation packages for Tulare County Board members are well over $100,000 per year. Visalia City Council members and Visalia Unified School Board members get about 1/10 the amounts of the Tulare County Board members in salary compensation.

Are Pete Vander Poel and the other four members of our Board really putting the needs of Tulare County first, or are they putting their own needs first? Our Supervisors appear to have lost touch with the needs of this community. It seems they are so awash in their own perks they can't see through the forest any longer. Let them spend a day out in the kitchen at county jail or observe the crisis worker or emergency response social worker placing kids in foster care in the middle of the night.

We need our Board of Supervisors and County Administrative Officer to support us, value us as a work force that delivers services to the thousands of citizens of this county on a daily basis. "We The People" value this community. We do not feel our Supervisors or Tulare County Administration are often about placing a value on their own workforce, including many hard-working employees, their neighbors, who are registered voters. Putting community first does NOT mean rewarding management while leaving front-line workers behind.

Many of you remember the Hands Across America event in 1986. We attempted to form a human chain across the entire 48 continental states to help raise money for the poor. The song that was written for Hands Across America had a few words that went as follows, "Divided we fall, united we stand." We have to stay united today in order to move our community forward.

No, Tulare County is not Wichita--neither is it Mayberry RFD. But in my 40 years of living in California, it is the closest I have come to when it comes to the people, environment, schools, including music and sports programs and places of worship.

Pete Vander Poel was right when he said, "The individuals that we elect to government offices to represent us should be in it to represent interests of their constituents and not their own." However, our Tulare County Board of Supervisors need to understand that putting community first should be defined as placing value on all of the workers of this county not just themselves, executive management, and the county administrative officer. This would go a long way in assuring that Tulare County could continue to be a wonderful community for decades to come only if…….

Kermit Wullschleger works for the Tulare County Adoption Agency and has been a Tulare County employee for almost 25 years.

Columns & Letters

VUSD's Local Plan for the New School Year

Craig Wheaton

The 2014-2015 school year is just about to begin, and it is the first year under the new way we receive money from the State of California, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

What is meant by "Local Control?" In the past, districts were told how to spend funds based on many specific programs but now each community can develop a plan to meet the local needs of students. There are several state goals that include a wide range of areas such as meeting the Common Core Standards, increasing student achievement, attendance, parent involvement, reducing suspensions, basic services and improving school climate and safety.

This actual plan itself is called the "Local Control Accountability Plan" (LCAP) and was adopted in VUSD after months of public input in a process similar to playing an accordion. If you have ever played an accordion or perhaps just listened, there is a considerable amount of movement in and out required to produce the sounds that reach our ears.

During the year, we, the educational musicians, opened the LCAP accordion to draw in the thoughts and ideas of the community. Those thoughts and ideas were then pressed through the keys of the state goals and local district data to create a LCAP song that provides services that address the needs of our students.

We are very excited about the LCAP song composed by the community. After several years of budget cuts, new funding is flowing into the district. We are able to restore and add services for students. We have added teachers to reduce class sizes and increased the number of advanced courses for students. New career-oriented academies are beginning at each high school. Science opportunities are spreading throughout VUSD elementary schools with new school gardens and robotics programs. Middle and high school after-school programs will not only continue but will grow. Music and performing arts has always been a valued experience in VUSD, and you will see the high quality of our programs continue for years into the future.

It isn't easy to learn to play an accordion; it does take time and hard work. I am sure we didn't compose a masterpiece in our first year. I do believe that pulling the accordion wide and pulling in the voices of the community has provided the district's educational leaders with enough air to play a sound that is truly a local song, one that speaks to the needs of our students. What a difference a year can make! The 2014-2015 school year is one of more support and opportunity for the students of Visalia Unified.

Craig Wheaton, Ed.D., is superintendent of the Visalia Unified School District.

Eight Ways to Save on Your Next Summer Vacation

Better Business Bureau

Vacations can sometimes come with a hefty price tag. Rather than overspending, be proactive and plan ahead. This time around, you can enjoy a real vacation without depleting your funds or creating unnecessary debt.

As you begin planning your trip, check your BBB to make sure that all deals are legitimate. Avoid being scammed by doing your research and planning carefully.

Clear Point Credit Counseling Solutions, a BBB National Partner, provides great tips on how to make vacationing more affordable. Here are eight ways you can better manage your budget when preparing for your next excursion:

Avoid the debt trap by saving up ahead of time for your holidays, and use cash whenever possible. When you run out, you run out.

Prepare a budget – Planning is key. Make a little room in your budget by cushioning it for unexpected occurrences and emergencies. The rule of thumb: Set a budget and stick to it.

Be resourceful – Check the chamber of commerce website where you will be vacationing for suggestions and links to recreational ideas. Or consider a staycation – a budget vacation where you visit nearby attractions but sleep in your own bed at night.

Timing is everything – If you do plan on traveling outside of your immediate area, aim for the off-season. Prices are usually substantially lower, and you won't have to deal with the crowds. Off-season depends on where you are: summer can be a terrific time to visit a ski resort, where you can get nice rooms and all the non-skiing amenities for a fraction of the cost of a winter trip.

Make it short and sweet – You don't have to go on a two-week trip in order to feel refreshed after a vacation. Take a long weekend or two, and maximize your itinerary by planning activities well ahead of time.

Avoid unnecessary costs – Don't find yourself trapped by additional charges or fees. For example, avoid hotel room phones, which often carry hefty surcharges.

Pack your own meals – When on the road, avoid gas station convenience stores, which generally have higher prices. Also, check your local visitors' center or websites for coupons to local restaurants.

Transport yourself – Choose a location with lots to see and do, and walk from place to place. Also, consider using the local bus or transit service rather than driving and parking.

Online Comments

Comment at ourvalleyvoice.com or fb.me/ourvalleyvoice

"Green might have even won if the general public knew that Mr. McCracken had suffered a mild heart attack shortly after Memorial Day." You should be ashamed of your self for even saying that, trying to compare "mr green to mr crackens long time service to porterville, and a lot of people did know that pete was sick, mr green is not a good candidate , thats why he didn't win and come in 3rd and just like the name is very green when it comes to helping run a city such as porterville and its long failing economic development,mr green would be last at best!"

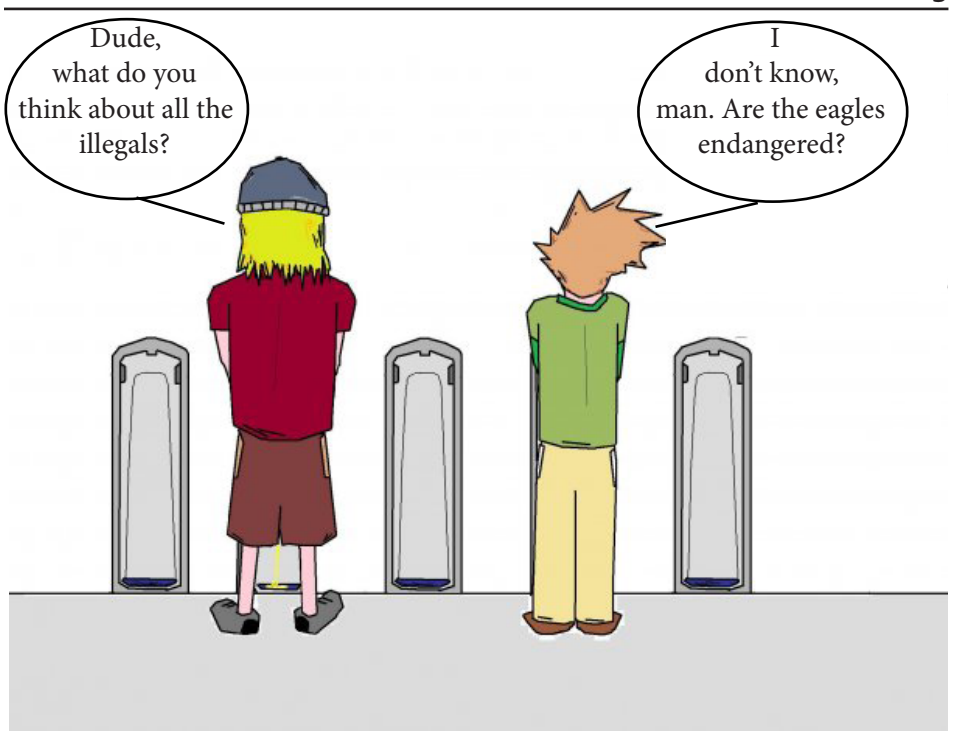
— ***alex station, on Political Fix (3 July 2014)***

"I like Tom's idea about a ballot measure to help address the excessive executive compensation that has taken ahold of Tulare County government."

— ***Kermit Wullschleger, on County Employees Fight for First Raise Since 2008***

Black Tie

Alex Oldenbourg



Veteran's Corner

Family Caregiver Support

Joe Wright

Family caregivers provide crucial support in caring for our nation's veterans by allowing them to stay in the homes and communities they defended, surrounded by the loved ones they fought for. Caregivers in a home environment can enhance the health and well-being of veterans under VA care. The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers allows VA to provide additional supports and services to family caregivers of eligible veterans injured in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001.

In order to be eligible, the veteran must have incurred or aggravated a serious injury (including traumatic brain injury, psychological trauma or other mental disorder) in the line of duty, on or after September 11, 2001. Because of the qualifying serious injury, the veteran must require another person (a caregiver) to assist with the management of personal care functions required in everyday living. The serious injury must render the veteran in need of personal care services for a minimum of six continuous months based on a clinical determination that takes into account various factors. Once enrolled, the veteran will receive ongoing care from a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) or other VA health care team as a requirement for participation in the program.

The caregiver must be at least 18 years of age, and be the veteran's spouse, son, daughter, parent, step-family member or extended family member or be someone who lives with the veteran full-time. Prior to approval, the caregiver will be provided with training and must be able to demonstrate the ability to assist the veteran with personal care functions required in everyday living. Support for caregivers includes a monthly stipend, travel expenses (including lodging and per diem while accompanying veterans undergoing care), access to health care insurance (if the caregiver is not already entitled to care or services under a health care plan), mental health services and counseling and respite care (not less than 30 days per year).

If the veteran is not currently enrolled in VA health care, both the VA Form 10-10 EZ for VA health services and the application for the Caregiver Program (VA Form 10-10CG) will need to be completed. Our office can assist with completing both forms. For more information on the Caregiver Support Program, visit www.caregiver.va.gov.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran ID cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office web page at www.countyofkings.com.

Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call 852-2669; or e-mail joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.

"I think is great! it's an investment in Visalia's History, present and future"

— ***Daniel Bowe, on Oval Park Fundraising Effort***

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The harvest!

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Pixley School Garden Helps Grow Healthy Kids

Staff Reports

An old proverb states that it takes a village to raise a child. The teachers at Pixley School believe it is not just a village, but a unique combination of community agencies, good curricular material and a little bit of dirt.

In Pixley, they are growing healthy kids in their school garden. The recipe includes:

- One motivated third grade teacher, Fidel Garcia, to present his plan to the Tulare County Farm Bureau, California Ag in the Classroom, the Dairy Council of California, and Life Lab.
- Applications for grants from all of those agencies.
- The assistance of Garden Enhanced Nutrition Education educator Grilda Gomez from the University of California Cooperative Extension.
- A group of dedicated third graders.
- Supporters like Bonnie's Plants to provide seeds for cabbage, zucchini and onions.
- Work and cooperation, with Mr. McGrady's class researching and planting the herbs, while the classes of Mr. Garcia and Mr. Gutierrez plant in the main garden.
- A lot of watering and weeding.

Mrs. Gomez, University of California Cooperative Extension and the students used the harvest to prepare fresh coleslaw that included the six plant parts that were learned as part of her curriculum.

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Valley Voice
Valley Scene

Summerland Tour Brings Everclear, Soul Asylum, Eve 6 and Spacehog to Visalia Fox Theatre

Steve Pastis

Everclear will perform at the Visalia Fox Theatre on July 20th, along with Soul Asylum, Eve 6 and Spacehog, as part of the third annual Summerland Tour, which has stops in nearly 40 cities around the country.

Everclear is known for songs such as "Santa Monica," "Everything to Everyone," "I Will Buy You a New Life," "Father of Mine" and "Wonderful." Soul Asylum, which formed in 1981, is perhaps best known for the 1992 Grammy-winning single "Runaway Train," a song that resulted in many runaways reuniting with their parents.

Southern California pop-punk trio Eve 6 had hits with "Inside Out," "Think Twice" and "Here's To The Night." Spacehog, which was formed in 1994, has a unique glam-rock-style sound influenced by such artists as T.Rex, Iggy Pop, Queen and David Bowie. They topped the charts with "In the Meantime."

Despite emerging in the 1990s, all four bands continue to write and record new music, as well as tour, something that is very important to Art Alexakis of Everclear, who put the tour together.

"There are no 'mothball' bands on my tour," Alexakis said proudly. "They don't live off their royalties. I wanted bands that are real bands, still chasing the carrot."

Everclear will have a new, as yet "untitled" album out early next year, according to Alexakis. "I have named it, but I'm not telling you," he said, as politely as possible. "I reserve the right to change the name at the last minute."

Is he happy with the new record?

"I love the new record!" he responded. "I'm not happy – I'm ecstatic! It was recorded like I did back in the day, with three guys in a room."

Alexakis has apparently been asked a few too many times about how Everclear was formed. "We met at a sex party in 1915 in the middle of a great war," he said, laughing before providing a more plausible response. "I put an ad in The Rocket (a free biweekly newspaper out of Seattle) and the first two guys from Portland were terrible. The second two guys, from Seattle, were terrific, but the first version of Everclear never worked because they were in Seattle and I was in Portland."

He said that he "met a guy digging ditches" and they spent $10 an hour to record a demo, which became their first record. They parlayed the record, which was getting increasing airplay on college radio stations, into a recording contract. "We were signed by Capitol after a bidding war," he said.

Everclear (with Art Alexakis in the center)

Alexakis can't remember why the band was named Everclear, which is also the name of a 190 proof spirit. "I just like the way it sounded," he said. "It's almost as strong as acid. I grew up in the '70s and I experimented with a lot of drugs."

He added that the other band name being considered was Sparkle. He was told that he made the right choice.

Alexakis' voice seems to reflect pain, but he calls it passion. "I'm a Greek guy so I'm passionate about life," he said. "My family did a lot of yelling. My dad left us,

SUMMERLAND continued on **23 »**

38 Special to Appear at Eagle Mountain Casino on August 8

Staff Reports

Eagle Mountain Casino is continuing its 2014 concert series with 38 Special headlining an 8pm show on August 8.

After more than three decades together, the band continues to bring its signature blast of Southern Rock to more than 100 cities a year. With sales in excess of 20 million, most associate the band with their arena-rock pop smashes, "Hold On Loosely," "Rockin' Into the Night," "Caught Up in You," "Fantasy Girl," "If I'd Been the One," "Back Where You Belong," "Chain Lightnin'" and "Second Chance." Their many gold and platinum album awards stand in testament to the endurance of this legendary group.

38 Special

Guitarist, vocalist and founding member Don Barnes explained that it's all about maintaining that intensity in their live shows. "We never wanted to be one of those bands that had maybe gotten a little soft or complacent over the years. We're a team, and it's always been kind of an unspoken rule that we don't slack up, we stack up. We go out there every night to win.

"And the magic's still there," Barnes added. "It's an emotional high for us to keep 'bringing it' after all these years. That's what you hear on the new live stuff, that sense of urgency and power. When those lights go down and we all walk up those steps to the stage and hear that crowd roar, it's a real rush to the head. It feels like we're getting ready to strap ourselves in and it just takes off from there."

Tickets ($30, $45) are available at www.eaglemtncasino.com and at the casino gift shop, (800) 903-3353.

The Upper Tule Association Mountain Festival offers something for everyone.

Upper Tule Association Mountain Festival Set for August 2-3

Staff Reports

The 29th Annual Upper Tule Association Mountain Festival will be held at Camp Nelson Meadow, at the corner of Nelson Drive and Smith Drive in Sequoia National Forest, on August 2-3, beginning at 10am each day.

This two-day festival will be highlighted by kids' games, a bounce house, arts & crafts, foods, Forest Service log sawing, horseshoe tournaments, displays and a visit from Smokey the Bear. The Camp Nelson Volunteer Fire Department and the Camp Nelson Ambulance Association will display their equipment. Jim Crew will put on his bird show at 1pm on Saturday.

Entertainment will include Jerry Hall & Trick Shot and An Occasional Brass. The Friday Night (August 1) Rib Dinner starts at 5pm. A top block barbecue will be served on Saturday from noon to 4pm.

For more information, call 542-2551.

'Fiddler on the Roof' Comes to Tulare County

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the debut of the "Fiddler on the Roof" Broadway production, the TCOE Theatre Company will perform the popular musical seven times this month at the L.J. Williams Theatre, 1001 Main St., Visalia.

"'Fiddler' is one of the most popular musicals ever written," said Brian Roberts, director of the theatre company. "We wanted our students to be familiar with the material because it is a classic and because they will certainly come across it again as they keep performing."

"Fiddler on the Roof" is the story of Tevye, a father of five daughters who struggles to maintain his family and their Jewish traditions in pre-revolutionary Russia. Tevye, who will be played by Redwood High School junior Jack O'Leary, must cope both with the strong-willed actions of his three older daughters and the edict of Russia's czar to evict the Jews from their village.

"We try to select very different material from year to year," says Roberts. "So, after doing 'Shrek' last summer, a classic like 'Fiddler' seemed natural. Our students will be challenged by the deep characters and the cultural differences they encounter in this show. It's an actor's musical, demanding strong characterizations that are very different from what our students have experienced in the past."

The original Broadway production of the show, which opened in 1964, was

FIDDLER continued on **23 »**

Redwood High School's Jack O'Leary will star in "Fiddler on the Roof" as Tevye, a poor dairyman and father of five daughters in pre-revolutionary Russia.

Visalia Players' 2014-2015 Season Features Drama, Music, Comedy

Nancy Holley

For over 50 years, the Visalia Players have been providing live theater presentations for the enjoyment of Visalia and the surrounding communities. Their 2014-2015 season, which opens early in August, promises to be one of their best with familiar names as well as productions to broaden your theatrical experience.

The opening show is "Bonnie & Clyde: A New Musical." Since its premiere performance in La Jolla in 2009, the musical version of "Bonnie & Clyde" has taken the world by storm with performances in Japan, South Korea, London and Broadway. The Great Depression folk heroes' love story and crime spree is enhanced with 1930s country and gospel music that will have your toes tapping.

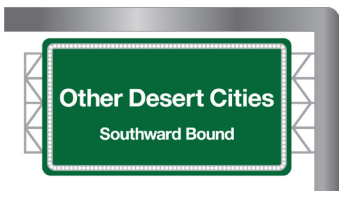
"The Trip To Bountiful," originally a 1953 TV production that was taken to Broadway and ultimately became a 1985 film, is currently enjoying a theatrical revival with Cicely Tyson that has garnered numerous awards, including a best actress Tony for Tyson. As the Players' second show of the season, "Bountiful" promises to bring audiences the poignant story of Carrie Watts, an aging widow in the late 1940s.

Our second musical of the season, "Side By Side By Sondheim," is a review of the Steven Sondheim's wonderful songs from Broadway and film. Beyond the attraction of beautiful music, the narrator provides interesting tidbits of how and why songs were written and produced – or not. "Side By Side" will be presented as a lobby show.

Are you ready for an hilarious spoof of Alfred Hitchcock's work? If so, "The 39 Steps" is the show for you. The original "39 Steps" was a 1935 Hitchcock thriller. Patrick Barlow's zany adaptation calls for four talented actors to portray over 150 characters, providing non-stop laughs. "The 39 Steps" will provide entertainment for the entire family.

"Baby with the Bathwater" is typical Christopher Durang, with unexpected twists and turns. Imagine a young couple totally unprepared for parenthood trying to figure out what to do with this "thing" that doesn't even speak English. Their calamitous mistakes are wildly hilarious making for a fun evening.

Very popular with professional and amateur theatres since its 2011 debut is "Other Desert Cities." The play joins staunchly Republican parents with politically opposite children during the Christmas season. Not enough possibilities for drama? Try adding an unhinged aunt and generous amounts of alcohol. Let the Wyeth Family entertain you.



Our season closes with "The Graduate," a very popular movie in the late 1960s, adapted for the theatre by Terry Johnson. Benjamin Braddock, aimless after graduating from college, finds adventure in an affair with an older married woman only to fall in love with the woman's daughter. Filled with laughter and tears, "The Graduate" depicts the follies of youth as well as the desperation of neglect.

Special features throughout the season include "Back Stage at the Ice House" hosted by Sharon DeCoux and a featured artist for each show.

After the second Sunday matinee of each production, DeCoux will give the audience a chance for a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to mount a stage play, with an opportunity to ask questions and interact with cast and crew.

The works of the artist for each show are displayed in the box office and/or lobby areas of the theater. The artist is available to discuss his or her work with attendees at specific performances.

All performances are at the Ice House Theater. The show schedule is:

- "Bonnie & Clyde: A New Musical" – August 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23 and 24
- "The Trip to Bountiful" – October 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18 and 19
- "Side By Side by Sondheim" – November 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29 and 30
- "The 39 Steps" – January 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24 and 25
- "Baby with the Bathwater" – February 27, 28, March 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14 and 15
- "Other Desert Cities" – April 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, May 1, 2 and 3
- "The Graduate" – June 12, 13, 14, 19, 20,21, 26, 27 and 28

Season tickets are $94. Individual tickets purchased in advance are $16 for adults; $8 for students. Individual tickets purchased at the door are $20 for adults; $10 for students,

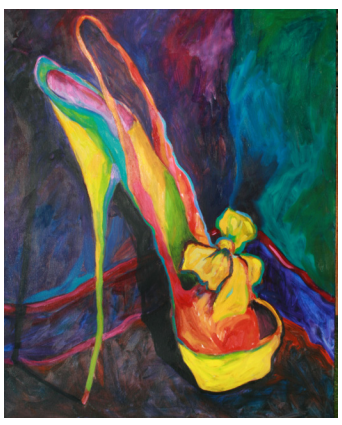
To purchase individual or season tickets go to the Visalia Players' website at www.visaliaplayers.org or their Facebook page ("Visalia Community Players"), or call 734-3900.

"Navaho Idea" by Betty Berk.

Betty Berk Retrospective at Michael's Custom Jewelry in Downtown Visalia

Staff Reports

Betty Berk is showing a retrospective of her still life paintings at Michael's Custom Jewelry in Downtown Visalia through July and August. There will be an artist's reception for her during the First Friday event on August 1.



"Her Point" by Betty Berk

Her "shoe" paintings are a fun display of bold femininity. Some of the still lifes honor Navajo patterns in her own creative designs. In her more recent works, you'll see beautiful color and vibrant brushwork. These paintings demonstrate the influence of her other passion, playing the piano, as musical notes and arpeggios are brushed on with painted colors.

Berk has been involved in the arts all of her life. Her accomplishments include many awards and exhibits throughout the San Joaquin Valley. She is the exhibits director of Alliance of California Artists and teaches art at Dinuba High School. She developed and chairs the Dinuba Festival of the Arts, a school district and citywide celebration of the arts.

For more information, visit www.bettyberk.com.

Photography by Meyer and Harrison at Tulare Historical Museum

Staff Reports

The Tulare Historical Museum will exhibit photography by David Meyer and Richard Harrison in its Heritage Art Gallery from July 31 to September 27. A reception to meet the artists will be held on July 31st between 5-7pm. Events at the gallery, located inside the Tulare Historical Museum, are always free to the public.

The ordinary becomes extraordinary in David Meyer's photographs.

Meyer calls his exhibit "What You Saw, But Not the Same," and explained, "Beauty has its many proponents and that is right and proper. However, my photographic passions are concentrated upon the ordinary. There are times when the ordinary becomes extraordinary. I attempt to use my photographic endeavors to capture the things that often fly under the radar. It is intriguing to me how much of our surroundings go unnoticed. And that's the fascination."

Harrison likes to photograph images of the San Joaquin Valley. He says his photographs are of "The Middle Kingdom of California," a title that was coined by his wife late one foggy winter afternoon north of Woodlake. He likes to call it that, because each small town in California's Central Valley differs in both appearance and personality.

"Knowing a good thing when I hear it, I immediately stole the idea and applied it to a project I had been thinking about the last couple of years," Harrison said. "This was only the beginning of The Middle Kingdom project. Little did I know how much work lay ahead or the many rewards and interesting places I would visit or people I would meet.

"Originally, the goal was to take places and buildings located in the Central Valley," he continued. "Reality struck when I looked at a map with a seemingly endless number of small towns sprinkled across the Valley. Focusing on its people was a natural progression."

The museum is located at 444 W. Tulare Ave., Tulare. Hours of operation are 10am to 4pm Thursday-Saturday. For more information, call 686-2074.

Tracy Harris, Wyndfall Flute Orchestra to Perform at Prestigious Convention

Staff Reports

Tracy Harris and the Wyndfall Flute Orchestra have won bids to perform, present and conduct at the prestigious National Flute Association Convention to be held August 7-10 in Chicago. This convention draws from the international flute and music community, with the attendance this year expected to exceed 10,000.

Tracy Harris

Harris, who lives in Exeter, is a highly sought-after soloist, chamber musician and clinician performing on piccolo, C flute, alto flute and bass flute. Performing internationally on piccolo to low flutes, she gives numerous solo performances, chamber recitals, clinics, flute boots and master classes. She has soloed with many symphony orchestras from the Santa Barbara Symphony to the Pacific Coast Symphony, and has held many first chair positions, including the Santa Maria Symphony and the West Coast Symphony. She is currently alto flutist and soloist in residence with the Tulare Symphony.

Harris is the artistic director and founder of the Tracy Harris Flute Boot Camps, which help over a thousand underprivileged flutists each year (www.FluteBoot.com), as well as the Wyndfall Chamber Music Series that performs to sold-out audiences each season.

She records on the Elite Source Label and her latest CD, "Iroquois Suite," released in August 2012, features works by Herman Beeftink, major motion picture composer for such films as "X-Men" and "Lions for Lambs." Her newest Wyndfall Duo release is the album *Eklectick*, recorded in partnership with concert pianist Svetlana Harris.

Harris studied at the New England Conservatory of Music with Claude Monteux and at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and was a student of Yamaha Artist Julius Baker, Jim Walker and Jill Felber. She has received Performance Grants from organizations such as the Pillsbury Foundation, the National Arts and Letters Society, the Scandinavian Foundation and the Santa Barbara Foundation.

Harris has performed on NPR and at NFA conventions and is also the founder of "The Tracy Harris Flute Master Class" series. She has worked with notables such as Jim Walker, Tadeu Coelho, Jill Felber, Mary Karen Clardy and piccolo legend Nicola Mazzanti. She recently premiered three works with Mazzanti by Todd Harris, one of which was showcased at James Galway's International Master Class in Switzerland. Performances can be seen on YouTube.

As the artistic director for the Wyndfall Conservatory, Harris teaches flute and piccolo and is also in the award winning Wyndfall Trio with Concert Pianist Svetlana Rudikova Harris and Concert Harpist Wendy LeBlanc.

The Dark Sky Festival to Celebrate the Night Sky

The night sky in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks is nationally recognized. Darkness not only adds to the aesthetic qualities of the wilderness, but it is important to the health of park wildlife. The Dark Sky Festival aims to educate visitors about the importance of this park resource and inspire them to take action in their own community.

The festival is an opportunity to share a passion for the night sky and astronomy during a weekend that will include: constellation tours, telescope viewings, solar observations, astronaut speakers, kids' activities, speakers on robotic Mars missions, model rocket building, National Park Service programs, special Crystal Cave tours, nature walks, audiovisual presentations and photography presentations.

A complete schedule is available at www.sequoiahistory.org/default.asp?contentid=785.

Ramon Ayala y sus Bravos del Norte

Norteño Music Superstar Ramon Ayala to Headline Tachi Palace on July 27

Staff Reports

Ramon Ayala has been an accordionist, vocalist and songwriter for more than 40 years. Along the way, he has defined norteño music with signature songs and definitive instrumental styling that have made him a superstar on both sides of the Rio Grande.

Ramon Ayala y sus Bravos del Norte – Fidencio Ayala, Jose Luis Ayala, Mario Marichalar, David Laure and Raul Rosales – bring their talents to the Tachi Palace stage on Sunday, July 27 for a 6pm show. Tickets start at $25 and are available at www.tachipalace.com.

Foxygen

Foxygen to Fill Cellar Door on August 8th

Aaron Gomes

Foxygen, the bi-coastal songwriting duo of Sam France and Jonathan Rado, will play at The Cellar Door in Downtown Visalia on Friday, August 8. France, a 22-year-old vocalist is from Olympia, Washington, and Rado, also 22, is a guitarist and keyboardist from New York City.

Together they are the raw, de-Wes Andersonization of The Rolling Stones, Kinks, Velvets, Bowie, etc., that a whole mess of young people desperately need. They create a sometimes-impressionistic, sometimes-hyper-real portrait of sounds from specific places and times. Yet, it never comes across as anything but absolutely modern music. They bring the manic, freewheeling qualities of an artist like Ariel Pink to those aforementioned influences to make for one of the most refreshing listens of the year. They are the real deal and total savants. Their albums are love letters to vinyl collections.

The group has won "Best New Music" awards from Pitchfork Media, "Artist of the Year" from *Paste Magazine*, and has played nearly every major festival during the past two years. The band's wildly theatric live show is not to be missed and often sells out quickly.

Dub Thompson will kick things off in support of their new Dead Oceans release. The album was recorded by Foxygen's Jonathan Rado. It's brilliantly wild, weird and manic.

Tickets for the 9:30pm, 21+ show are $10 and available at Ticketweb.com and at Velouria Records.

Aaron Gomes is the founder and owner/operator of Sound N Vision Foundation, a nonprofit organization that brings indie bands to the area and sponsors local art events.

Tesla

Tesla, KIX to Rock Tachi Palace Stage

Staff Reports

Tesla and KIX will rock the stage at Tachi Palace in Lemoore on July 31st.

Tesla is a multi-platinum-selling rock band from Northern California known for their melodic songs and down-to-earth appeal. Thanks to their die-hard, loyal fan base and their offspring, Tesla continues to tour to sold-out crowds around the world.

KIX

KIX performs shows at festivals, casinos and biker rallies across the country, establishing their status as one of rock's truly legendary live acts. The band has been in the top billing for the last two years on the wildly popular Monsters of Rock Cruise.

Tickets for the 7pm show are $25, $30, $40, $50, $75 and $95, and are available at www.tachipalace.com.

Please join us for a Wine Flight Night
Thursday, July 24th - 6:00 - 9:00 pm
5 wines - $20 with Dinner
559-732-8611
www.depotvisalia.com
207 East Oak Avenue
Next Flight - Tuesday, August 5th
The Southern Pacific Depot Restaurant

Budweiser

MUSIC

Through-August 29 – Rockin' the Arbor – 6-10pm
On Friday nights, Tachi Palace Hotel & Casino will present Rockin' the Arbor, featuring live music, food vendors and family activities at 300 E Street. Featured bands include: Roadhouse July 18; Prestige July 25; 82 Deluxe Aug. 1; Midnight Wine August 8; Force 'Em Aug. 15; Rockville Aug. 22; and The Fabulous Enchantments Aug. 29. Info, call 924-6401.

July 17, 24, 31 – 3's A Crowd – 7-10pm
On Thursdays, 3's A Crowd performs at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

July 17 – Elvis Presley Tribute Concert – 8pm
After selling out the last four shows, an Elvis Presley Tribute Concert will be held at Crawdaddys Visalia. Dinner is included. For tickets, call 681-6135.

July 18 – G.T. Hurley – 7pm
G.T. Hurley will perform at Mavericks Coffee House, 238 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia. Tickets are $20. Seating is limited. For information, visit mavericks coffeehouse.com.

July 18 – Brown Bag Lunch Performances – 12:15pm
Bring lunch and listen to music by the students of the Santa Teresita Youth Center in Three Rivers. Admission is Free. For information, visit CenterStageStrings.com.

July 18, 19, 25, 26 – The Crawdads – 7-10pm
Every Friday and Saturday, Keith and the Crawdads perform at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

July 18 – Travis – 8-10pm
Travis of Doc's Holiday will perform at Farmer's Fury, 358 West D, Lemoore. For information, visit farmersfurywines.com.

July 18 – Fundraiser for Adam Furtado – 9pm
Velouria Records presents a Fundraiser for Adam Furtado featuring foot of feathers, Ocherb and Slow Season at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St., Visalia. Furtado was badly beaten one night while taking out trash at Velouria Records. The money is to help him pay for medical bills and lost wages. A donation is requested for entrance. For information, visit giveforward.com.

July 18, 19, 25, 26 – The 2nd Floor Night Club – 10pm-2am
Every Friday and Saturday, the second floor of Crawdaddys Visalia offers deejays and dancing. For info, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

July 19 – Honors Concert – 7:30pm
Center Stage Strings students will be featured at a Honors concert at St. Anthony Retreat Chapel of Three Rivers. The performance is part of the Summer Music Festival. Tickets are $12 or $50 for all concerts. For information, visit CenterStageStrings.com.

July 19 – Cloudship – 8-10pm
Cloudship will perform at Farmer's Fury, 358 West D, Lemoore. For information, visit farmersfurywines.com.

July 20, 27 – Sunday Jam – 7-10pm
On Sunday nights, a jam session with the Crawdad's is featured at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. Special guests and local talent have been known to sit in. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

July 20 – Summerland 2014 with Everclear – 7pm
Soul Asylum, Eve 6, Spacehog and Everclear will perform in the Summerland Tour 2014 at Visalia Fox. Proceeds go to the Sound N Vision Foundation, the Visalia Arts Consortium and the Visalia Opera Company. For tickets, $25-55, visit foxvisalia.org.

July 21 – Farmer's Fury Party Bus – 6:30pm
The Farmer's Fury bus will leave from the tasting room at 358 West D St., Lemoore, and will travel to see the Florida Georgia Line perform at the Paso Robles Mid State Fair. Tickets include round trip bus pass, food and wine on the bus, plus concert ticket. Entry ticket to fairgrounds is not included. Must be 21. For information, call 816-0019.

July 22, 29 – The Crawdads with Cody Torres – 7-10pm
On Tuesdays, Cody Torres performs with the Crawdads at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

July 23, 30 – KJUG Country Music night – 7-10pm
Every Wednesday, David Laswell and the Rounders perform at KJUG Country Music Night at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

July 24 – Concerts in the Park – 7pm
Chase Rice will perform at Exeter City Park as part of the city's Summer Concerts series.

July 25 – Tipperary Stew – 6:30-8:30pm
Tipperary Stew performs Irish and Americana music and dance every fourth Friday at 210 Cafe, 210 W. Center, Visalia. For information, call 739-9010.

July 25 – Springville Concerts in the Park – 7-9pm
Teresa Russell will perform. Bring lawn chairs, blankets and refreshments. For information, visit thecenterofspringville.com.

July 25 – IslaView – 8-10pm
IslaView will perform at Farmer's Fury, 358 West D, Lemoore. For information, visit farmersfurywines.com.

July 25 – MEZCAL – 9:30pm
Mezcal and Rosalinda Verde will perform at this 21+ Concert at the Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St., Visalia. Tickets are $10. For information, visit snvfoundation.org.

July 26 – Bad Luck & Trouble – 8-10pm
Bad Luck & Trouble will perform at Farmer's Fury, 358 West D, Lemoore. For information, visit farmersfurywines.com.

EVENTS

Through-Aug. 20 – Farmers Market at Quail Park – 10:30am-1:30pm
Quail Park Retirement Village will host a Farmers Market every Wednesday through August 20 at 4520 W. Cypress Ave., Visalia. For information, call 624-3500.

Through-Aug. 29 – Rockin' the Arbor – 6-10pm
On Friday nights, Lemoore Chamber of Commerce will present Rockin' the Arbor, featuring live music, food vendors and family activities at 300 E Street. For information, call 924-6401.

July 17 – Pacific Employers Safety Programs Seminar – 10-11:30am
Pacific Employers and the Tulare-Kings Builders Exchange will host a seminar at the Builders Exchange at 1223 S. Lovers Lane in Visalia. The mid-morning seminars include refreshments and handouts. RSVP to Pacific Employers at 733-4256. For information, visit pacificemployers.com.

July 17 – Thursday Night Market Place – 5:30-9pm
Night of Vintage Treasures will be the theme of Hanford's Thursday Night Market Place. Richie Blue Band (Rock and Soul) will be the featured entertainment. Fresh produce, beer garden, live band, D.J., local vendors, kids activities and theme nights are featured every Thursday night through September in downtown Hanford. For information, visit mainstreethanford.com.

July 18 – Ribbon-Cutting Firestone – 11-11:30am
The Visalia Chamber of Commerce will hold a ribbon-cutting to celebrate Firestone's grand opening at 1736 Mooney Blvd. For information, visit visaliachamber.org.

July 18, 25 – Downtown Dinuba Certified Farmers' Market – 5-9pm
Local fresh fruits and vegetables, food vendors, music, games, prizes and bounce houses. For information, call 591-5940.

July 19, 26 & Aug. 2, 9 – Visalia Farmers Market – 8-11:30pm
Open year around, the market, corner of S. Mooney and W. Caldwell, offers fresh local produce, cooking demonstrations and entertainment. For information, visit visaliafarmersmarket.com.

July 19-20 – Rocky Mountain Gun Show – 9am
The Rocky Mountain Gun Show will be held at Visalia Convention Center. For tickets and information, visit rockymountaingunshow.com.

July 19-20, July 26-27 – Exeter Museum and Courthouse Gallery – 10-4pm
Exeter Museum and Courthouse Gallery is open for tours at 125 South B Street. For information, visit exeterhistoricalmuseum.com.

July 19 – Public Safety Town Hall – 2-4 pm
Assemblymember Rudy Salas will hold a public safety town hall at the Kings County Government Center Multipurpose Room, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd., Hanford. Representatives from every law enforcement agency in Kings County will be present. For information, visit asmdc.org/cz.

July 20, 27 – Back to Basics: Wilderness Skills – 10am
Sequoia Natural History Association will host a Kings Canyon naturalist for a wildlife-spotting clinic. Meet at John Muir Lodge registration desk. For info, visit sequoiahistory.org.

July 20 – Food Fight Against Hunger – 3-6pm
The Sixth Annual Food Fight Against Hunger pits amateur chefs against each other. The California Restaurant Association event also features prizes, live music, drawings, cooking demonstrations and complimentary wines, beers and hors d'oeuvres. Tickets are $25. Proceeds benefit the Visalia Rescue Mission. For information, visit vrmhope.org.

July 22 – Sexual Harassment Training – 8-11am
Personnel Solutions and Holiday Inn are sponsoring a program on sexual harassment. Admission is $30. To register, call 734-0570.

July 22 – Business After Hours – 5:30-7:30pm
Visalia Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours will be hosted by Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center. For information, visit visaliachamber.org.

July 23 – Stop Harassment Prevention Seminar – 7:30-10am
As part of its Labor Law Compliance Series, the Visalia Chamber of Commerce will present this breakfast seminar at the Lamp Liter Inn. Reservations are required. Call 734-5876.

July 23 – Secrets to E-Marketing Campaigns – 9-10:30am
The Porterville and Exeter Chambers will offer this session on E-Marketing campaigns to assist businesses in integrating E-Marketing into their business plans. To register, call 784-7502.

July 23 – Ribbon-Cutting for The Greyson Group – 10:30-11pm
The Visalia Chamber of Commerce will welcome The Grayson Group to the chamber at the Mangano Room, 220 N. Santa Fe. For information, visit visaliachamber.org.

July 24 – Shades of Green – 8am-12pm
Green Building will be discussed at the Southern California Edison Energy Education Center, 4175 S. Laspina St., Tulare. A basic review of the green programs available in California will be held. Admission is free. For information, call 866-240-7163.

July 24 – Family HealthCare Network Ribbon-Cutting & Grand Opening – 11-1pm
The Visalia Chamber of Commerce will hold a ribbon-cutting at the new site of Family HealthCare Network, 401 E. School Ave. For information, visit visaliachamber.org.

July 24 – Plantation Bed and Breakfast Ribbon Cutting – 11:30am
The Exeter Chamber of Commerce will wel-

VENT CALENDAR

come the new owners of Plantation Bed and Breakfast, Gregg and Lisa Schultz, at 33038 Sierra Dr., Lemon Cove. For information, call the Exeter Chamber at 592-2919.

July 24 – Passive House Basics – 1-5pm
A half-day class designed for Raters interested in programs to develop a base for Passive House Construction, Net Zero Home and Performance Home Construction will be held at the Southern California Edison Energy Education Center, 4175 S. Laspina St., Tulare. Admission is free. For information, call 866-240-7163.

July 24 – Young Professionals Networking Mixer – 5:30-7:30pm
The Young Professionals Network of Visalia will meet at the Pita Kabob, 227 N. Court St. Cost is $10. Must be 21 or older. Bring business cards for networking and to win prizes. To make reservations, send an email to vypn@visaliachamber.org.

July 24 – Hanford Thursday Night Market Place – 5:30-9pm
Fresh produce, beer garden, live band, D.J., local vendors, kids activities and theme nights are featured every Thursday night through September in downtown Hanford. Doc's Holiday (Americana) will be the featured entertainment. For information, visit mainstreethanford.com.

July 26 – Micro Sprints – 5pm
The best Micro Sprint drivers in the nation will face off at Lemoore Raceway, 1750 Hwy 41. For information, visit lemooreraceway.com.

July 27 – Library For London 5K Run/Walk – 8am
Celebrity Runner Fernando Cabada will be the featured runner in a fundraiser to establish a library comparable to nearby cities like Dinuba, Kingsburg and Reedley. A Kid's Fun Run will also be held. To register, visit libraryforlondon.com.

July 30 – Olive Grower's Pre-Harvest Meeting – 7:30am-3pm
The Olive Grower's Council and University of California Agriculture and Natural Resource will hold its Pre-harvest Olive Day Meeting at Exeter Memorial Building, 324 N. Kaweah Ave. For registration and information, visit ceturlare.cuanr.edu.

July 31 – New Lemoore Health Center Grand Opening – 10am
The Lemoore Chamber will hold a ribbon-cutting and grand opening for the United Health Centers New Lemoore Health Center at 1270 N. Lemoore Ave.

July 31 – Ribbon-Cutting - Snowmann's Shaved Ice – 10-11am
Exeter Chamber of Commerce Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony to welcome Snowmann's to the community at the chamber office. Samples will be given. Open to the public. For information, call 592-2919.

July 31 – Thursday Night Market Place – 5:30-9pm
"Get Your Grove On" will be the theme of Hanford's Thursday Night Market Place in downtown Hanford. Karaoke Night will be featured at 7th & Irwin. For information, visit mainstreethanford.com.

July 31 – Tachi Palace Night at the Casino – 5:30-7:30pm
Tachi Palace, in partnership with the Lemoore, Tulare, Visalia and Tulare-Kings Chambers of Commerce, will feature food and entertainment at the Tachi Hotel and Casino. For information, visit visaliachamber.org.
August

Aug. 1 – First Friday in Downtown Visalia – 6-10pm
Artists, musicians, performers, photographers, poets, sculptors, vendors and shop owners come together in downtown Visalia on the first Friday of each month to showcase the wide array of talents and diversity among the community. For info, visit firstfridayvisalia.

THEATER

July 18-20 – Tarzan – 7:30pm
"Tarzan," based on the story by Edgar Rice Burroughs and the Disney Film, will presented at the Encore Theatre, 327 S. N Street, Tulare. Friday and Saturday shows begin at 7:30pm. Sunday matinees begin at 2pm. For tickets and information, call 686-1300.

July 19 – Gattaca
Tulare County Library Visalia Branch Science Film Series will be held in the Purple Room, Visalia Branch, 200 W. Oak Ave. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Tulare County Library.

July 19 – Movies in the Park
"Gravity" will be shown at the Visalia Parks and Recreation Movies in the Park. Held every Saturday at dusk at Riverway Sports Park, 3611 N. Dinuba Blvd., Movies in the Park allows residents to enjoy a movie on a giant screen. Lawn chairs, blankets and picnics are permitted. Film descriptions and ratings available online at liveandplayvisalia.com.

July 19 – Dive-In Movies – 6pm
"After Earth" will be shown at the Summer Night Lights Dive-in Movies program at Mt. Whitney High School pool, 900 S. Conyer St., Visalia. The program, which runs through July 26, features free movies and swim time. The pool opens at 6pm and the movie begins at dusk. Snacks, blankets and lawn chairs are permitted. For information, visit liveandplayvisalia.com.

July 23 & 30 – Optimist Movies in the Park – 6pm
Free family movies will be shown in Exeter City Park. Blankets and lawn chairs welcome. For information, call 909-2996.

July 26 – Dive-In Movies – 6pm
"Monsters University" will be shown at the Summer Night Lights Dive-in Movies program at Mt. Whitney High School pool, 900 S. Conyer St., Visalia. The program features free movies and swim time. Snacks, blankets and lawn chairs are permitted. For information, visit liveandplayvisalia.com.

KIDS

Through July 25 – Sizzlin' Summer Day Camp
Hanford Parks and Recreation will operate a summer day camp at the Teen Center, 400 N. Douty St. For information, visit ci.hanford.ca.us.

Through July 30 – Summer Night Lights – 6:30-9:30pm
Every Saturday Night through July 30, the County of Tulare offers Summer Night Lights, a program that aims to curb violence and other negative activity by keeping selected parks and recreational facilities open during the summer months. The Wittman Village Community Center will host the first event at 300 Pearl St., Visalia. For information, call 636-5000.

Through Aug. 1 – Valley Oak SPCA Critter Camp
Critter Camp offers summer fun for youth ages 5-12 with activities, crafts, and guest speakers. The camp will be Monday through Friday from 9am to 1pm at Valley Oak SPCA Animal Shelter and Adoption Center, 29016 Highway 99, Visalia. Camps for ages 5-7 will be held July 21-25, July 28-August 1. To register, visit vospca.org or Valley Oak SPCA.

Through Aug. 2 – Movies in the Park
Movies in the Park return to Riverway Sports Park in Visalia. Movies begin at dusk and are shown on a giant screen in the new special events promenade in the park. This is a free family event. Movie schedule includes July 19th – "The Avengers"; July 26th – "Gravity"; and Aug. 2 – "The Lego Movie."

Through Aug. 8 – Porterville Summer Day Camp – 7:30am-5:30pm
The Porterville Heritage Center is offering summer day camp for children ages 5-12. Activities, crafts, sack lunches and snacks will be provided. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Cost is $80 for full days/full-week, $50 for half days/full week; $20 full-day drop-in and $10 for half-day drop-in. A $5 discount is available for siblings of full-week participants. The center is located at 256 E. Orange Ave. For information, call 791-7695.

Through Aug. 8 – Rockin' the Rec – 7am-6pm
Lemoore Parks and Recreation will host weekly summer day camps for children ages 5-12. Camp is an all-day program with breakfast and lunch provided by the KCAO Food Program. Activities include arts and crafts, indoor and outdoor activities, swimming, movies, picnics and a weekly field trip. Cost is $120 a week, $420 for 4 weeks; and $820 for all 9 weeks. Registration required. For information, visit lemoore.com/parks.

Through Aug. 8 – The Loop Bus – 12:30-6:30pm
A free bus is provided to youth, ages 6-17 years, to Visalia Community Recreation Centers Monday through Friday. Youth must pre-register to use the service. Call 713-4365.

Through Aug. 8 – Kamp Kaboom – 7:30am-5:30pm
The Whitendale Community Center is offering summer day camp for children ages 5-12. Activities, crafts, snack lunches and snacks will be provided. Registration is on a first-come-first-served basis. Cost is $100 for full week, $20 full-day drop-in and $10 for half-day. The center is located at 630 W. Beech, Visalia. For information, call 713-4365.

Through Summer – Summer Food Rocks – 12-1pm
A nutritional lunch is available to kids 18 years and younger Monday through Friday at Anthony Community Center, Manuel F. Hernandez Community Center and Whitendale Community Center in Visalia. Meals are free, but kids are required to eat lunch on site. For information call Visalia Parks and recreation at 713-4365.

July 17 – Team Building Night – 5-8pm
Summer Night Lights will present a Team Building Night at Allensworth School. Admission is free. For information, call 564-8055.

July 18, 25 & Aug. 1 – Friday Summer Night Lights in Visalia – 6-9pm
The Summer Night Lights Program includes games, music, activities, and food. Events will also be held July 11th, Rawhide Baseball Stadium; July 18th, Manuel Hernandez Community Center; July 25th, Boys and Girls Club (Tulare Ave.); Aug. 1, Riverway Sports Park. For information, visit stepuptc.com.

July 18 – Summer Night Lights Fun in the Sun – 6-9pm
Tulare County Board of Supervisors presents Fun in the Sun featuring food, activities, games and music at Woodlake High School as part of its StepUp Program. Free Admission. For information, call 564-8055.

July 18 – Summer Night Lights – 6:30-9:30pm
The Summer Night Lights program continues at Manuel F. Hermandez Community Center, 247 W. Ferguson Ave., Visalia. Every Saturday Night through August, the County of Tulare offers Summer Night Lights, a program that aims to curb violence and other negative activity by keeping selected parks and recreational facilities open during the summer months. For information, call 636-5000.

July 18, 25 – Dinuba Summer Night Lights – 7-9:30pm
Games, music food and free activities will be held at Entertainment Plaza, 289 S. L St., Dinuba. For information, call 591-5940.
July 19 – NFL Flag Football and Fall Youth Volleyball Registration Day – 10am-12pm
Register for the Visalia Parks and Recreation Flag Football or Volleyball July 19 to receive a $10 discount at Anthony Community Center, 345 N. Jacob St., or at liveandplayvisalia.com. The NFL Flag Football leagues play Saturdays at Whitendale Park from 9am-2pm. Fall Youth Volleyball leagues play Saturdays at Manuel F. Hernandez Community Center from 9am-2pm.

July 19, 26 – Summer Night Lights – 6:30-9:30pm
Every Saturday Night through July 30, the County of Tulare offers Summer Night Lights, a program that aims to curb violence and other negative activity by keeping selected parks and recreational facilities open during the summer months. The Visalia Boys & Girls club will host the event at 215 W. Tulare Ave. For information, call 636-5000.

July 20 & 27 – Dive In Movie – 6-10pm
Dive-In Movies sponsored by Summer Night Lights will be offered free during the summer. This family activity runs every Saturday until July 26th. The program will be held at Mt. Whitney High School Pool in Visalia. For information, visit ci.visalia.ca.us.

July 22, 29 – Kindergarten Readiness Storytime – 6:15pm
Every Tuesday, the Tulare Public Library hosts story time in the Kids' Space.

July 22-25 – ImagineU Summer Camp
Rocket launches, animals from Chaffee Zoo and panning for gold are some of the activities being offered at the Summer Camp offered by ImagineU Children's Museum. Cost for each class is $3 for members and $8 for non-members. Pre-register and pay in advance for each class by calling 733-5975.

See more events online
ourvalleyvoice.com

COMMUNITY

Through July 18 – Lemoore High School Public Swim – 12-1:50pm
Lemoore High School pool will be open for public swimming Monday through Friday. Cost is $2.50. A season swim pass is available for $25 or $75 Family. For information, visit lemoore.com/parks.

Through July – Sharps Drop Off Days
The new Home-Generated Sharps Waste Collection Program went into effect on July 1, and provides Tulare County residents free drop-off of their used sharps at the local retailer where they originally purchased their sharps. To launch the program, Consolidated Waste Management Authority is hosting four free drop-off events throughout the County to collect sharps from residents. Sharps will only be accepted in approved certified sharps containers. For information, visit cwmarecycles.com.

Through July 30 – Voices of the Past – 6pm
Travel back in time with a Sequoia naturalist to see the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks through a living history character. This one-hour presentation is held daily at Wolverton Patio of the Wuksachi Lodge. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

Through Aug. 2 – Visalia Public Swim – 12-3pm
Monday through Saturday, the lifeguard-supervised pool at Redwood High School will be open to the public. Redwood High School is located at 1001 W Main St., Visalia. Those under age 6 must be accompanied by an individual 16 years or older. Cost is $1.50 for ages 13+ years, and $1.25 for ages 12 and under. Passes are also available for $20 at Anthony Community Center. For information, visit liveandplayvisalia.com.

Through Aug. 3 – Hanford Public Pool
Hanford Pool is open through August 3, Tuesday through Saturday from 12-4pm and Sunday from 5-8pm. The pool is located at 415 Ford St. For information, visit ci.hanford.ca.us.

Through Summer – Porterville City Pool – 12:15-4:15pm
The City Pool, 97 N. Park Dr., will be open Monday through Thursday through the summer. Admission: $1 children, $2 adult. Monthly pool passes, $30/adults and $20/children, are available at the pool cashier. For information, call 782-7543.

Through Oct. 11 – Kiwanis Maserati Raffle
The Kiwanis Club of Exeter Foundation is raffling a 1986 Chrysler RC Convertible by Maserati to raise funds for the Schroth Park playground. Drawing will be held at the Exeter Fall Festival Oct. 11. Tickets, $35 each or 3 for $100, are available at ABC Bookkeeping and Tax Services, Nielsen & Associates Insurance Agency and the Exeter Chamber of Commerce.

July 17 – Senior Care Luncheon – 11:30am-1pm
Hands in the Community will hold a luncheon at Cafe 225 in Visalia. For information, visit hnconline.org.

July 17 – Stars and Stories – 6:30pm
Tulare County Library Visalia Branch Adult Summer Reading Program Literary Elements series continues with Stars and Stories. The program meets Thursdays every week through July 24th. The evening event will meet at Sam Pena Planetarium. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Tulare County Library.

July 17, 24, 31 – Flashlight Hike – 8:30pm
A 1-hour, half-mile hike will be held by the Sequoia Natural History Association to explore the nocturnal world. Bring warm layers and a flashlight. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

July 18, 25 – Fridays for Families – 9:30am
A Sequoia Natural History Association naturalist will talk about the natural history of the Sierra Nevada. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

July 18 – Owl Prowl – 7:30pm
Listen for owls during this one-hour, one-mile hike beginning at Crescent Meadow in Sequoia National Park. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

July 19 – Mensa Test – 11am-1pm
American Mensa Chair Dan Burg will conduct the Mensa Test at the offices of the *Valley Voice*, 208 W. Main St., Suite E, Visalia. The fee for the proctored IQ testing session – an opportunity to find out how smart you really are – is $25. For reservations or more information, email tulare-kings@sfmensa.org.

July 20, 23, 25, 30 – Wonders of the Night Sky – 9pm
Meet in the Wuksachi Lodge lobby for this one-hour, half-mile hike exploring the beauty and wonder of the park's protected sky. Bring warm layers and a flashlight. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

July 23, 30 – Wildlife Wednesdays – 10am
Every Wednesday, a Sequoia naturalist hosts a one-mile wildlife-spotting clinic. Hikers meet at the Wuksachi Lodge. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

July 23, 30 – Family Campfire – 7:30pm
A family campfire will be held at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks John Muir Lodge Lobby fireplace. A naturalist from the Sequoia National History Association will share stories behind the scenes of the national park. Feel free to bring fixings for s'mores. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

July 24 – Pints for Polio – 5:30-7:30pm
Visalia Sunset Rotary will hold a fundraiser for the Rotary Foundation to help eradicate Polio Worldwide. Tickets, $20, include a Rotary beer glass, t-shirt, one free beer, and 20% off food during the event, which will be held at Bravo Farms, Visalia. For information and to buy tickets contact ryan.purkiss@ipi.com.

July 24 – Visalia Philatelic Society Auction – 6:15pm
Visalia Philatelic Society will meet at the Fellowship Hall of Grace Lutheran Church, 1111 S. Conyer St. For information, call 686-5067 or 734-6353.

July 24 – Duffy Hudson as Albert Einstein – 6:30pm
Tulare County Library Visalia Branch Adult Summer Reading Program Literary Elements series will host its final program with Duffy Hudson as Albert Einstein. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Tulare County Library.

July 27 – Religion and Human Rights – 5-6pm
Rev. John A. Buehrens will speak at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Visalia. Rev. Buehrens has served congregations across the country and was the sixth president of the Unitarian Universalist Association. A potluck supper and conversation will follow the service. For information, visit uuvisalia.org.

Aug. 1 – iPhones & You – 6:45-8:15pm
Visalia Parks and Recreation is offering a workshop on advanced features of the Apple iPhone at the Visalia Senior Center. Cost is $15. Register online at liveandplayvisalia.com.

Aug. 2 – Exeter Volunteer Fire Department Poker Run
The Exeter Fire Department Poker Run begins at Exeter Memorial Building. For information, 592-3714.

Aug. 3 – Divorce Recovery Enrollment Deadline
Pastor Lon Heighton, Porterville Church of the Nazarene, will offer a 9-week class on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8pm beginning Aug. 20. Cost is $25. Classes will be held at the church: 2005 W. Olive Ave. To enroll or for information call the church office, Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5pm at 784-3305.

Aug. 3 – Living Your Strengths Enrollment Deadline
Pastor Julie Cheney, Porterville Church of the Nazarene, will offer a 6-week class to assist in learning how to identify your talents and inspire you to discover your true calling. The class meets Wednesdays beginning Aug. 20. Cost is $20. Classes will be held at the church: 2005 W. Olive Ave. To enroll or for information call the church office, Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5pm at 784-3305.

Aug. 7 – Visalia Philatelic Society Auction – 6:15pm
Visalia Philatelic Society will meet at the Fellowship Hall of Grace Lutheran Church, 1111 S. Conyer St. For information, call 686-5067 or 734-6353.

Aug 10 – Second Sunday Seminars – 2-3pm
The Sarah Mooney Museum features seminars on the second Sunday every month. The programs focus on specific elements of turn-of-the-century life in the Lemoore/Kings County area. Lynda Lahodny will discuss "The Parlour." The museum, located at 542 W. D Street in Lemoore, is open every Sunday afternoon from 12-3pm for docent-led tours and special activities. For information, visit sarahamooneymuseum.com.

Aug. 10 – 50+ Rocks Hiking Club – 8-6pm
The 50+ Rocks Hiking club will travel to Twin Lakes Trail. The program offers those ages 50 and older guided hikes and a seat on the Sequoia Shuttle. Bring a sack lunch, water and daypack. Cost is $25. Pre-registration required. For information, visit liveandplayvisalia.com.

Aug. 11-Sept. 24 – Couch to 5K – 5:30-7pm
Learn about what it takes to become a runner and compete in a 5K run in a matter of weeks. Experienced runner Traci Dykstra will provide a guided training schedule. Class meets for seven weeks at St. John's Trail (Ben Maddox Entrance) in Visalia. Those under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Cost is $40. Register at liveandplayvisalia.com.

Aug. 12, Sept 9 & Oct. 14 – Valley Oak SPCA Yappy Hour – 5-9pm
The Planning Mill Pizzeria will donate a portion of Yappy Hour proceeds to Valley Oak SPCA on the Second Tuesday of each month. Well-behaved, leashed pets are welcome on the patio at The Planning Mill, 514 E. Main St., Suite A, Visalia. For information, visit vospca.org.

Aug. 16 – Central Coast Wine Tasting
Lemoore Parks and Recreation will offer a wine bus trip featuring transportation, continental breakfast, wine tasting at three fine Central Coast wineries and a specialty lunch from one of the wineries. Departure is from the Civic Auditorium. Cost is $65 per person. For information, visit lemoore.com/parks.

Aug. 20 – Changes That Heal – 6:30-8pm
A 12-week faith-based course will help participants connect more deeply with others and form intimate relationships. Classes will be held at Porterville Church of the Nazarene, 2005 W. Olive Ave. Register by Aug. 3. Cost is $15. To enroll or for information call the church office, Monday-Friday,

ART

Through July 25 – North American Print & Drawing Exhibition – 12-5:30pm
A competitive exhibition with significant cash prizes, artists from throughout the United States and Canada were invited to submit artworks for consideration for inclusion in the show. Forty pieces by 37 artists were chosen for the exhibition and will be featured in the exhibit at Arts Visalia through the month of July. The gallery is located at 214 East Oak Ave. in downtown, Visalia and open Wednesday through Saturday. For information, visit artsvisalia.org.

Through July 26 – Yosemite Renaissance XXIX Exhibit
Yosemite Renaissance, an exhibit originating at the Museum in Yosemite Valley, will have its works on display at The Kings Art Center, 605 N. Douty St., Hanford. For information, call 584-1065.

Through Aug. 31 – Betty Berk Artist Reception
Artist Betty Berk is now showing a retrospective of her still life paintings at Michael's Custom Jewelry, 316 W Main St., Visalia. An Artist Reception will be held during First Friday, the multi-sensory entertainment crawl in downtown Visalia. For information, visit bettyberk.com.

Through -August 29– "Beauty Runs in the Family" – 10am-3pm
The Creative Center's Jon Ginsburg Gallery is hosting a mother and daughter show featuring works by Milli and Lesli Pepper. For a tour of the gallery, call 733-9329, or visit the Creative Center office at 606 N. Bridge.

July 18-20 – Open Air Peddler's Market
After taking the summer off, the Pedder Market will resume. Held on the third weekend of each month, it features antiques and collectibles is held at 558 E. Palm, in Exeter. Questions or dealer inquires may contact Karen at 592-1940 or Paul at 936-1487.

July 19 – Christmas in July – 10am-3pm
Central Valley W.O.M.E.N.'S Network presents Christmas in July at the Lamp Liter Inn in Visalia. Admission is $2, current military and immediate family are free. Over 45 vendors will have crafts and gifts to jump-start holiday shopping. Proceeds benefit CVWN Scholarship and Relay for Life. For information, visit centralvalley-womensnetwork.org.

July 31 – Photography Exhibit Reception – 5-7pm
The Tulare Historical Museum will host a Reception for a photography exhibit in its Heritage Art Gallery. The works of David Meyer & Richard Harrison will be on display from July 31-Sept 27. For information, visit tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Aug. 1 – Young at Art Opening Reception – 6-8pm
Arts Visalia will hold an opening reception for works of art by children and youth of its Summer Art Programs. Admission is free. The art will be on exhibit between Aug. 1 through Aug. 29 every Wednesday through Saturday between 12-5:30pm. For information, visit artsvisalia.org.

Dal Henderson Brings 'Serious Stuff' to Kings Art Center

Staff Reports

Dal Henderson is among the San Joaquin Valley's most respected and accomplished visual artists. His work, known for its energy, vibrancy and humor, has been featured in many solo and group exhibits throughout the Western United States.

His work will be featured in the Marcellus Gallery at Kings Art Center from August 2 to September 20. An opening reception will be held on August 1, from 5:30-7:30pm. Light refreshments will be served

Born in Los Angeles and educated at CSUF where he received his MA and subsequently taught art, Henderson has remained productive with an impressive resume of exhibits and collectors. From the simple hammer to world issues, all have at some time in his career been observed and used as resource for his visionary work.

"Dumptruck" by Dal Henderson

"My work is not only about the product, but also about the process it takes to get to that end," Henderson explained. "The differences that occur between one completed piece and another are a result of the constant process of decision-making. I deal with materials as honestly as possible to develop cohesive surfaces.

"My primary goal is to make art that is both closed and open," he added. "The art is closed when the surface seems complete. It remains open because it doesn't necessarily deal with representational images. It is its own image, its own idea, and there are questions that haven't been answered. The end result of my art is that I have a fragment of reality. It is a piece of something I can hold on to. "

Henderson has had solo exhibits at the Fresno Art Museum, the Sherry Frumkin Gallery in Santa Monica, the Louise Allrich Gallery in San Francisco, the art galleries at USC and Northern Arizona University, and the Gerard John Hayes Gallery in Los Angeles. He has been included in numerous group exhibits including those at the Legion of Honor, the San Francisco Art Institute and the Crocker Museum in Sacramento. His work has been reviewed in *ARTFORUM*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and many times in the *Fresno Bee*. His work is included in many permanent collections.

"Hammer" by Dal Henderson

Thunderbowl Raceway to Host 'Peter Murphy Classic' on July 26

Staff Reports

On July 20 of last season, the King of the West 410 Sprint Car Series had one of its toughest nights in recent memory when popular driver Peter Murphy suffered injuries during a main event crash at the Antioch Speedway. The result of the accident ultimately forced Murphy to retire from Sprint Car racing as a driver, having suffered a traumatic brain injury, ligament damage in his neck, shoulder and knees, along with a compressed T-3 vertebra.

Despite his injuries, Murphy hit the pavement and raised money with plans to beef up the Antioch Speedway event that was scheduled on July 26. With the scheduled show at the track recently canceled, the King of the West 410's will now invade the Tulare Thunderbowl Raceway on that date. The event will also be known as the "Peter Murphy Classic."

Peter Murphy

The money Murphy raised will now go towards the night in Tulare, which happens to be the track where the Sydney, Australia native earned his first ever victory in the United States and took his final lap in April. The date is just over a year since that night few will ever forget last year in Antioch.

"With the one-year anniversary of my wreck coming up, I wanted to do something at Antioch to help make the night a special one for fans and teams," said Murphy. "The last time we were there it wasn't a very good ending, so I had planned to change that around this season and make it a memorable one for another reason. It's unfortunate we can't go to Antioch, but if there's another track I'd want to do something special at it would certainly be the Thunderbowl Raceway."

Murphy has raised $12,000 so far and now with the event being held in his backyard at the Thunderbowl, he is trying even harder to gather more. Details on how the money will be broken down will be out soon. His goal is to make the night a special one that people will remember and to get as many cars and fans to come out as possible.

"I really want this night to be a big one for all the fans and teams," Murphy said. "The King of the West Sprint Car Series is one of the best sprint car tours you'll find anywhere, and Tulare will be great place to host an event like this. I still can't thank everyone enough for all that they have done for me the last year. It's been so humbling to have the support from people all over the world. This is kind of a way for me to give back and show how much I appreciate this sport we all love."

The Dash that night will also have a special twist thrown in. Rather than doing the standard eight-car dash where all drivers compete for six laps, the night will see an Australian and New Zealand-style pole shuffle thrown into the mix.

The eight dash cars will still be determined the same way as always, but drivers will race each other two by two for two laps, until the final pair go at it for two laps to determine the pole sitter. The drivers that draw 7 and 8 will race each other first, with the winner going against the driver that draws number 6. The process will go on until there are two drivers left standing.

Reserved grandstand seats are $25, with general admission bleacher tickets at $20. To reserve a seat, call 688-0909. The front gate will open at 4pm with racing expected to get underway around 7pm.

The Merle Stone Chevrolet Thunderbowl Raceway is located at the Tulare County Fairgrounds on the corner of Bardsley and K Streets in Tulare. For more information, visit www.thunderbowlraceway.com or www.kwssprints.com.

Summer Hikes Planned in Sequoia National Park

Sequoia Natural History Association and Sequoia Field Institute are planning five group hikes in Sequoia National Park this summer, including:

Alta Peak Backpack, July 24-27

The scenic trail covers both mesmerizing geology and extremely diverse plant and animal communities. This four-day trip covers about 20 miles, 3,900' in elevation gain, and is a world away from the stress of work. Price ($175 SNHA member/$201 non-member) includes: wilderness permit, first night camping, instruction and guiding.

Yoga Backpack, August 4-7

This four-day, yoga-inspired backpacking trip begins at Crescent Meadow and along stunning views of the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the historic High Sierra Trail. Daily yoga sessions and opportunities to meditate both alone and with new friends should leave you feeling rejuvenated. This trip is about 25 miles. Beginning elevation is 6,800. Highest elevation is 8,300'. Longest daily mileage 9.5 miles. Price ($218 SNHA member/$251 non-member) includes: wilderness permit, first night camping, instruction and guiding.

Ducey/La Conte/Darwin, August 7-15

Some backpackers maintain that these basins contain some of the most beautiful country the Sierra Nevada Mountains have to offer. The nine-day trip offers a chance to see wildlife that

HIKES continued on **24 »**

Summerland

Continued from p. 17

but there's a lot of drama in everyone's life. I'm just a pretty intense person." Some articles about Alexakis say that he has a bad relationship with his father, still hating him for leaving the family when Art was a child. "No, it's not that I don't get along with my dad; it's that I don't know him. I was raised by my mom. My mom taught me how to be a man."

He also said that he was "never an atheist," as reported in articles that have him becoming a Christian to please his fourth wife. He adjusted that response to "maybe when I was 12-14 when my brother died and when my mother went to a mental institution."

Despite his musical success, Alexakis declared bankruptcy a few years ago. "I trusted people that didn't do the job," he explained. "I also trusted wives and ex-wives and they did bad things. I made bad decisions, but I dealt with it like a man and paid it all off."

Alexakis has been through a great deal in his life (he is currently writing an autobiography), but has been clean and sober for 25 years. "I like what I've accomplished," he said. "I'm 52 and I'm playing in a rock n'roll band."

Where does Alexakis see himself when he reaches the age of 60?

"I hope to be watching my younger daughter going into high school, and my older one married and having kids, or doing whatever she wants to in life. (She speaks four languages and has been accepted into law school.) Whether I'll be doing music, acting or doing a radio show, I don't know. It will be something creative, I hope. I want to work till the day I die, but I never want to have a job."

Tickets for the 7pm show are $25-$55 and available at foxvisalia.org. Proceeds from the show will benefit Sound N Vision Foundation, the Visalia Arts Consortium and the Visalia Opera Company.

Fiddler

Continued from p. 17

the first musical theatre run in history to surpass 3,000 performances. "Fiddler" also won nine Tony Awards.

Evening shows on July 18, 19, 24, 25 and 26 begin at 7:30pm. Matinee shows on July 19 and 26 start at 2pm. Tickets are $12 for general admission, and $20 VIP tickets are available at Visalia TCOE locations: 7000 Doe Ave., Suite A, and 2637 W. Burrel Ave., Monday-Friday during normal business hours.

For more information, call the TCOE Theatre Company at 651-1482.

Tulare County Fair to Offer R&B, Classic Rock, Country and More

Staff Reports

The Tulare County Fair's entertainment lineup this year offers everything from metal-meets-mariachi to country, R&B and classic rock favorites. The schedule includes:

Wednesday, September 10: Metalachi – This band is known for sombreros and extended classical violin solos sandwiched between covers of Guns 'n' Roses, Led Zeppelin and Metallica.

Metalachi

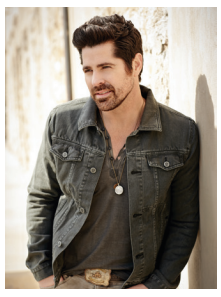
Thursday, September 11: Morris Day and the Time – This rhythm and blues/funk ensemble is led by Morris Day, whose career began in a band with Prince. Day was also featured in the Prince film "Purple Rain" and he has enjoyed a resurgence of popularity since an appearance with Rihanna during the 50th Anniversary Grammy Awards show.

Morris Day

Friday, September 12: Eddie Money – The would-be cop turned classic rocker has recorded over a dozen albums of his own as well as projects in television and film and always draws a crowd at the Tulare County Fair. The show will feature all of his greatest hits.

Eddie Money

Saturday, September 13: JT Hodges – Hodges saw success with his first three singles, including "Goodbyes Made You Mine," and he enjoyed a star turn in the Hallmark Channel's "Finding Christmas." He is now working on his second album release featuring the single "Already High."


JT Hodges

The Tulare County Fair will run September 10-14, offering a week of entertainment for the family, educational activities for children, the annual Junior Livestock Auction, Fair food, fun rides and more. Admission is $8 for adults; $5 for children ages 6-12. Seniors 62 and older are admitted for $5 on Senior Day, Friday, September 12. All Budweiser Stage concerts are free with paid admission.

The fair will also feature the annual Junior Livestock Auction, new food booths, the Destruction Derby, fun rides and more. Visit tcfair.org for ongoing updates to the schedule of events.

Tulare County Fair Accepting Applications from Local Entertainers

Staff Reports

The Tulare County Fair is seeking local entertainers to perform during the fair, September 10-14. The application form and details about available sound equipment are available on the entertainment page of the fair's website, tcfair.org. Applications are due by August 1.

Acts must be appropriate for fair-goers of all ages, and may include performers ranging from dance troupes and local singers to belly dancers. In addition to submitting the form, prospective entertainers are encouraged to provide samples of performances, letters of recommendation and web site information.

"The Tulare County Fair draws a huge crowd from throughout the South Valley, so it offers entertainers an invaluable venue to perform and make their name known," said Pamela Fyock, fair CEO.

Entertainers will be able to perform for crowds on the Eagle Mountain Stage and the Community Stage. The Budweiser Stage will be reserved for national headliner performers.

The Tulare County Fair will offer entertainment for the family, educational activities for children, the annual Junior Livestock Auction, fair food, fun rides and more. Visit www.tcfair.org for ongoing updates, or call the fairgrounds office at 686-4707.

Hikes

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few Californians ever see, and sleep in the heart of the second largest wilderness area in the United States. This trip covers about 70 miles, includes two optional layover days. The beginning elevation is 9,700'. Highest point on the trip is 13,568'. Average daily mileage will be nine miles. Price ($405 SNHA member/$466 non-member) includes: wilderness permit (two agencies), first night camping, instruction and guiding.

Rae Lakes/Sixty Lakes Basin, August 24-31

Imagine blue sky colored lakes, meadows so perfect you could golf on them, and peaks that shoot up dramatically, pointing to the stars at night. This eight-day hike covers 45 miles. The beginning elevation is 5,400'. The highest point is 11,978'. Price ($390 SNHA member/$499 non-member) includes: wilderness permit, first night camping, instruction and guiding.

Astronomers Backpack, August 25-28

This 4-day, 3-night trip will highlight the night sky, teaching participants the basics of backyard astronomy using the naked eye and powerful binoculars. Become familiar with more advanced deep sky objects, such as popular summer star clusters and nebulae that fascinate advanced astronomers. This trip is has an average daily mileage of 10 miles. Beginning elevation is 6,700'. The highest elevation will be 9,500'. Price ($230 SNHA member/$265 non-member) includes: wilderness permit, first night camping, planisphere, instruction and guiding.

To book a trip, contact the Sequoia Natural History Association & Sequoia Field Institute at 565-4222 or SNHA@sequoiahistory.org, or visit www.sequoiahistory.org/SFI.